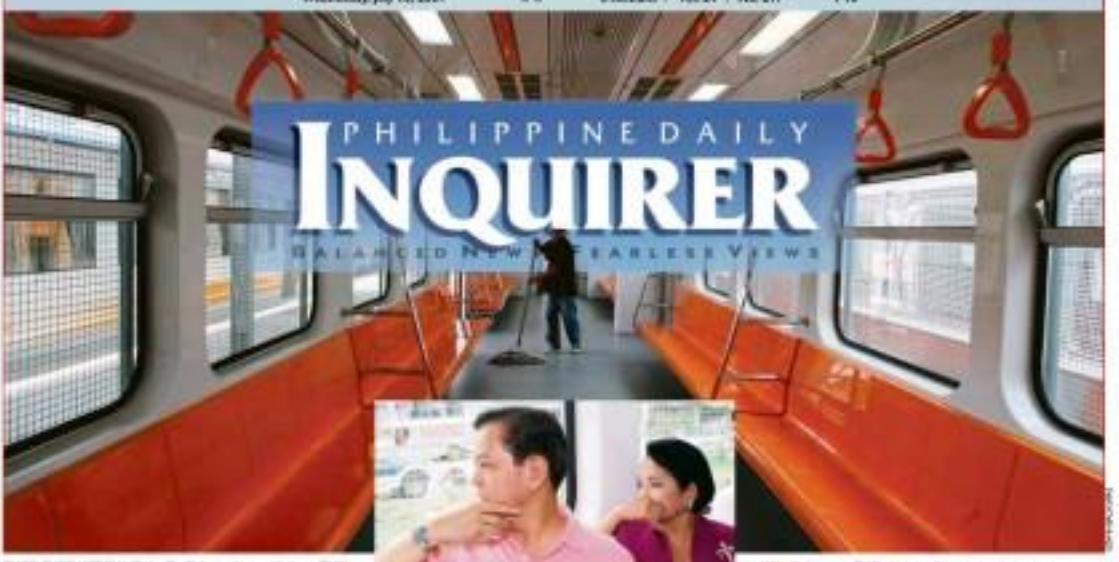
Wednesday, July 15, 2009 ★★ Business / Vol. 24 / No. 217 P18

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS FEARLESS VIEWS



CHOO-CHOO HOT CHA-CHA The Philippine National Railways (PNR) rolls out its new coaches from Korea on Tuesday, and the folks "along the line" do a double take, stop, look and listen. They can't believe it's the PNR...PNR!

Chief Mike Defensor, an GMA's chief of staff, boasts that the local trains are now like those in New York and Rome. Ms Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro (inset) are aboard for the inaugural run. Better than Choo-Cha.

Amnesty for Abus urged

Gordon's proposal gets support from freed Italian

RED LETTER DAY AT RED CROSS There's rejoicing at the Red Cross headquarters in Manila upon the return of Eugenio Vagni after his six-month captivity by the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu. Red Cross Chair Sen. Richard Gordon gives Vagni a tearful hug as he leads colleagues in welcoming the Italian aid worker. EDCUDAL

By Kristine L. Alave and TJ Burgonio

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Already, Eugenio Vagni has forgiven the dreaded Abu Sayyaf kidnappers who held him for six months and threatened to behead him.

"Good to have you back. Welcome," President Macapagal-Arroyo told the Italian volunteer of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) during a call at Malacañang to thank the government for securing his release Sunday.

The 62-year-old Vagni recounted his ordeal at the hands of his kidnappers in their forest hideout on Jolo island to the President hours before she flew to Egypt to attend a nonaligned summit, said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Present during the call were Italian Ambassador Roberto Antonio Fedele, Sen. Richard Gordon, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr. and Ermita.

Ermita said he later discussed with Gordon, chair of the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC), the senator's proposal to grant amnesty to the kidnappers as part of a long-term process to bring peace to strife-torn Mindanao. "We are thinking about it," he said.

At a news conference at the PNRC headquarters, Vagni said when asked if he supported Gordon's amnesty proposal, "I have to say I am alive. In my

AMNESTY A6

WHAT'S INSIDE

GMA set to sign EO on cheap medicine
NEWS / A2

Republican lawmakers grill Obama's choice for SC
WORLD / A24

6 accusers of Digos ex-police chief fear for lives
ACROSS / A16

'Load' life 'tripled' starting on Sunday

By Philip C. Tubeza

STARTING JULY 19, THE shelf life of cellular phone credits will be "tripled," with the prepaid load of P10 or less extended to three days and the load of more than P300 stretched to four months, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) announced yesterday.

On the prodding of the Senate, the NTC also announced that effective July 23 unsolicited "text spam" or promotional text messages would be prohibited.

The NTC action came in the wake of the uproar over "disappearing loads" caused by Senate president Juan Ponce Enrile's complaint of "vanishing load" in his prepaid account.

Consumer rights advocates have long criticized this practice of telecommunication com-

LOAD A6

PNR back on track with new coaches

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE HALF-NAKED MAN bathing outdoors, the woman busy with the wash, the child playing by the railroad tracks—they all had a singular expression of awe when the new train chugged past them yesterday afternoon.

With President Macapagal-Arroyo as its VIP passenger, the Philippine National Railways (PNR) coach was nothing short of a spectacle, at least to those who continue to stay in the so-called "home along the rails."

They waved, took pictures with their cell phones and tried to get as close as possible to the slow-moving train, simply an

PNR/BACK A10

SC asks 3 expert groups to comment on poll deal

By Norman Bordadora

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY ordered three groups of computer experts to comment and participate in the hearing on July 29 of a taxpayers' suit against the P7.2-billion project to automate next year's elections.

In an en banc session, the Supreme Court also ordered the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the group of Smartmatic International and Total Information Management (TIM) to answer the petition for a temporary restraining order (TRO).

The Concerned Citizens' Movement (CCM) filed the peti-

SCAMS A6

Not me, says doc accused of leaking GMA health file

By Tina G. Santos

THE PHYSICIAN ACCUSED OF ordering the opening of President Macapagal-Arroyo's medical file at Asian Hospital and Medical Center yesterday denied having done so.

Speaking through her legal counsel, Dr. Maria Rina Bermudez Reyes, an obstetrician-gynecologist who was on duty at the hospital's Center for Women's Health (CWH) during the President's latest confinement there, also blamed the hospital's "faulty" computer system for the leak on the latter's breast augmentation procedure in the 1980s.

"The hospital's computer system is faulty as it doesn't have a level of security; they do not limit the access of information to specific persons or departments," said Edwin Lacierda, Reyes' lawyer and brother-in-law.

Lacierda said doctors at the

NOT ME A10

Asean test: New 'boat people' from Burma

By Leila B. Salaverria

ON THE THAI-BURMESE BORder—When the dogs start baying at night, boy begins to grip those living in a village in the west of Burma (Myanmar) where the Rohingya people live. Most often than not, the howling of the dogs means soldiers are coming and one of the villagers will be taken away.

For the Rohingyas, a Muslim

ASEAN TEST A17

100 congressmen jostling for US trip

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

NO LESS THAN 100 CONGRESSmen—or nearly 40 percent of the total membership of the House of Representatives—are jostling for slots on President Macapagal-Arroyo's entourage in late July 30 meeting with US President Barack Obama in Washington.

100 CONGRESSMEN A17

Swine flu pandemic now unstoppable, says WHO

THE SWINE FLU PANDEMIC has grown "unstoppable" and all countries will need access to vaccines, a World Health Organization official said on Monday, as seven new deaths were reported and a study raised fresh concerns.

Britain, Thailand and the Philippines all reported deaths on Monday, while Saudi Arabia shut an international school after 28 students were diagnosed with the influenza A(H1N1) virus.

As the death toll increased, the WHO official said a swine flu vaccine should be available as early as September and all countries would need to be able to protect themselves.

A group of vaccination experts concluded after a recent meeting that "the H1N1 pandemic is unstoppable and therefore all countries would need to have access to vaccines," said Marie-Paul Kieny, WHO director on vaccine research.

Health workers should be at the top of the list for vaccination since they will be in high demand as people continue to fall sick, she added.

Countries would be free to

SWINE FLU A17

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

EZ2* 6 19 25 6
SUERTRES* 4 1 5 / 1 6 6 / 2 3 2
SIX DIGIT* 2 8 9 6 8 6
6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN 3 10 20 21 40 42 P14,902,983.00
SUPERLOTTO 6/49 20 22 24 25 29 43 P39,400,837.20

GMA to sign cheap meds EO

By Christian V. Esguerra and Dona Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WILL FINALLY SIGN NEXT week the executive order placing a price ceiling on 22 essential drugs sold in the country.

Malacañang made the announcement yesterday amid allegations that Pfizer Phil. had tried to bribe the President with some P500 million worth of discount cards for distribution to indigent patients around the country (See related story, Front page.)

Sen. Manuel Roxas claimed that representatives of multinational pharmaceutical companies had met with Ms Arroyo last July 8 in a bid to block the signing of the corrective order implementing a maximum retail price (MRP) system for drugs as required under the Cheaper Medicines Act of 2008.

"There is no truth (to the allegation) that [the President] negotiated or conspired with the manufacturing companies," said deputy presidential spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo.

Fajardo said that during the July 8 meeting, the President had simply made herself available to those who wished to reach out to her and explain why they felt their industry might be affected.

22 essential drugs

She said Ms Arroyo told the drug companies to decrease the prices of 22 essential medicines within 30 days.

"The President gave the drug companies 30 days to submit their voluntary compliance according. If (the will) be acceptable, then there will be no need for the EO because this will already serve the same purpose as the mandatory drug retail price provision of the Cheaper Medicines Law," she said.

The Department of Health said it will not settle for anything less than a 30 percent voluntary price reduction on essential medicines.

"We should be 30 percent or more, that's clear," said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, who expects to get the list of medicines and the corresponding price cuts from the drug companies by July 20.

To be acceptable, Duque said the drug companies' proposal should cover essential medicines for hypertension, diabetes, cancer, stroke, asthma and infection which account for six of the 10 leading causes of death in the country.

The voluntary price cuts would take effect "as soon as possible" once the DOH accepts the drug companies' proposal.

But if the DOH is not satisfied with the drug companies' voluntary price reduction, Duque said they will move back to imposing maximum retail price (MRP).

"There's nothing wrong with voluntary price reduction. But if we see (that it's just a token offer, then) the law has to be enforced," he said.

The DOH last month formally recommended to the President imposing a 30 percent price cut on 21 essential medicines, invoking a provision of the Cheaper Medicines Law.

The law, which took effect in November 2008, seeks to bring down medicine prices by introducing competition through the "parallel importation" of cheaper-priced medicines.

Duque said the market competition did not happen, so the DOH invoked the law's provision on imposing a price ceiling.

Roman Manuel

Meanwhile, Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico blasted Duque for the weakness of the Cheaper Medicines Law.

Suplico, a former congressman, said it was Roxas who moved to deliver a provision of the bill that would have created a Drug Price Regulatory Board to make sure the price of medicine was fair and affordable.

"He was the one who had that removed and then pursue was given to the President. That is why the law is weak," Suplico said.

He said the board would have been able to lower the price of medicines since its members included representatives from the DOH, the DTI, the Bureau of Food and Drugs, nurses, and doctors. With Philip C. Tubeza

Pfizer: No bribe in 'sulit' cards

PFIZER PHIL. VENTURES INC. must stay its offer of free million-peso (discount) cards to the government, concerned a letter for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a statement, Pfizer said it had volunteered to distribute its sulit cards to five million more patients in national and local government hospitals and rural, mostly health centers by the end of the year "to have more Filipinos benefit from Pfizer's high-quality medicines and patient-care programs."

It said these discussions began in May 2009 or before the announcement of the list of products subject to the maximum retail price list under the Cheaper Medicines Law.

Pfizer said it was "deeply concerned" by accusations of bribery in recent news reports and "saddened that our sincere desire to help has been misconstrued as bribery."

"We categorically deny this allegation and consider this a grave affront to our reputation," Pfizer said.

In a meeting of the congressional oversight committee on affordable medicines last Monday, party-list member Rita Bernaldo claimed that Pfizer had offered five million of these discount cards to President Macapagal-Arroyo during a meeting last July 8 in Malacañang which she said was intended to block the implementation of the executive order on MRP.

She said this constituted bribery "because it was made during the period when the executive order is about to be signed, and by one who made the offer was a company to be affected by the MRP."

In Malacañang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita described the bribery allegations as "too sweeping a statement."

"I don't know why anyone would even suspect that in such a call on the President, there was such a thing as bribery," he said.

Pfizer said it but also always sought to provide wider access "to our high-quality medicines" and this was what brought about the sulit card program.

It said the program, began in 2002 and which has benefited 1.8 million patients, was in place long before discussions on the Cheaper Medicines Act were started.

"We all share the common goal of a healthier Philippines. Together with the industry, we have initiated meetings with government agencies to dialogue on possible solutions to address access to medicines with full transparency," the company said. Philip C. Tubeza

GMA off to Egypt, again

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO left for Egypt yesterday afternoon to speak at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit.

The President and a team delegation of government officials and legislators left on a chartered Philippine Airlines flight at 3 p.m. for the two-day visit that would be her second to Egypt in two months.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Victor Ibrado and Egyptian Ambassador Saleem Shoukfi saw her off.

Ms Arroyo will be joining 117 other leaders of NAM member-countries at the summit, the group's 15th, in the resort city of Sharm El-Sheikh.

She will speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean).

NAM leaders are expected to issue a declaration on Palestine at the two-day summit which opens today and has for its theme, "International Solidarity for Peace and Development."

The summit is expected to adopt a final outcome document that would cover all political, security, economic and social issues, according to reports.

During her visit, Ms Arroyo will call on all NAM members to participate in the Special NAM Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development to be held in Manila in December, Malacañang said.

NAM, founded in 1961, now comprises 118 countries. It advocates the upholding of the principles of sovereign equality, non-intervention and non-interference in internal affairs, as well as the pacific settlement of disputes.

Puno back, will retake DILG post

HE'S BACK, RESTED, AND RARING TO RE-take the helm of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno flew back to Manila early Monday from a two-week vacation in the United States, dispelling rumors he had been sacked from the DILG.

He will be back at his desk on Thursday, his spokesperson said yesterday.

Interior Assistant Secretary Brian Yamsen said Puno's official leave was to end today.

Tomorrow, Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane, who took over Puno's post in concurrent capacity, returns full-time to the DPWH.

The rumor that Ebdane was to take over at the DILG for good cropped up after he sought a briefing on DILG operations during a command conference at Camp Crame.

It didn't help that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, in announcing Puno's leave, had said that it was for medical reasons. Tarra Quismundo

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GMA signs law to freeze rent for a year

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday signed into law the Rent Control Act of 2009 that imposes a year-long moratorium on rent increases, a move seen to provide relief for 1.9 million renting families.

The new law, Republic Act 9653, will not allow increases in housing rental for a year, and after that, it puts a cap on any increase to only seven percent until 2013.

The law will benefit some 1.6 million families renting homes across the country, majority of whom are paying a monthly rent of P10,000 or less, according to officials.

The ceremonial signing by Mr Arroyo at the Rizal Governorial Hall, attended by officials and sponsors from Congress, came seven months after the Rent Control Law expired on December 2008.

Meanwhile, we have an economic slowdown, and the significance of the Rent Control Law is that it would somehow assist or help our lessee-typed citizens so that they will not have the burden of seemingly inflationary increases in rental of their places of abode," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters.

For a year from the time RA 9653 takes effect, no increase will be allowed on the rent of any residential unit. After this, rent increases will be no more than 7 percent each year.

The law covers all residential units in Metro Manila with a monthly rent of P1 to P10,000 and all units in cities cities with a monthly rent of P1 to P5,000.

Violators face a fine of P25,000 to P50,000, or imprisonment of one month and a day up to six months, or both.

According to the law, when a unit becomes vacant, the owner may set the initial rent for the next renter. In the case of boarding houses, dormitories, rooms and bed spaces, an increase will be imposed more than once a year.

It also says that rent will be paid in advance within the first five days of every month, or at the beginning of the lease agreement unless the manner of lease provides for a later date of payment.

It forbids the owner from demanding more than one-month advance rent and more than two-months deposit. Any increase in the deposit will be evaluated in the course of the end of the lease agreement.

It also outlaws bills to pay water or utility bills or electric bills on property, the deposit and interest shall be forfeited in favor of the unit owner in the amount that would cover the arrears or damages.

The law prohibits the subletting of the unit without the consent of the unit owner. This, together with the failure to pay rent for three months and the owner's need to repossess the property or make necessary repairs to make it more safe and habitable, are grounds for judicial ejectment.

The owners, however, cannot be ejected on grounds that the unit has been sold or mortgaged to a third person.

The unit owner may engage the owners in a rent-to-own agreement, which will be exempt from coverage of the law.

Real estate law enacted, finally

AFTER 20 YEARS, THE REAL ESTATE Service Act (Resa) was signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo on June 29.

Republic Act (RA) 9646, hopes to professionalize and regulate the practice of real estate in the country through the development of technically competent, trained and accountable real estate practitioners in the country.

Under the new law, real estate consultants, appraisers, local government assessors and brokers will be overseen by the Professional Regulatory Board of Real Estate Service under the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

They will be subjected to a licensing process that will require them to pass a technical examination, comply with the program of continuing education and training, and observe the Code of Conduct and Responsibilities.

Salespersons, although not considered part of the professional group, will be accredited by the PRC, after undergoing training and working under a licensed real estate broker.

Resa will require real estate practitioners to post a Professional Indemnity Insurance/Guarantee Bond upon taking their oath to practice the profession before the PRC.

The new law is expected to stimulate the property market, encourage investment, generate employment and increase revenues for the government.

It was sponsored in the House by Rep. Raul T. Gonzalez Jr., chair of the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation, and in the Senate by Sen. Pimble M. Fortuna, acting chair of the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization.

The law, according to Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, should protect the public from unscrupulous real estate service practitioners.

'Isang' upgraded

A LOW-PRESSURE area earlier spotted by the weather bureau east of Northern Mindanao has developed into a tropical depression named "Isang."

"Isang" has nothing to do with the color in Metro Manila. Instead, it is the low-pressure area spotted 205 kilometers east of Iba, Zambales, that is bringing the rains to Metro Manila and Wednesday," said Nathaniel Cruz, Pagasa spokesperson, said. Alcuin Papa

Kapatiran proposes CBCP political desk in every parish

EVERY PARISH THROUGHOUT THE country should have a "political desk."

This was proposed by Ninoy Pacheco, founder of ang Kapatiran Party (AKP), to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) at the CBCP plenary assembly on Tuesday.

Pacheco gave 10 reasons and cited Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical in Part II of his first encyclical "Deus Caritas Est" on politics, the laity and the Church.

"The just ordering of Society and the State is a central responsibility of politics. A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church. The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society properly belongs to the lay faithful," Pacheco said quoting the Pope's encyclical.

Some of the reasons a political desk was needed are:

► To serve as a venue where the lay faithful interested in politics can go for spiritual and moral assistance.

► To explain the laity's involvement and leadership in politics.

► To educate the rule of the Church in political matters.

► To define that "a just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church."

► To explain that an election is not simply about candidates, but about objectives, values, policies and collective aspirations.

Pacheco said that in towns and cities where his AKP worked in evangelize politics, "we found that many lay faithful have wrong ideas about politics. [They] do not know what the Church is, who makes up the Church, the role of the lay faithful in the Church and to the world."

He said a great number of clergy were unaware about their mandate from the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines to teach it "to encourage the lay faithful to assume their duty and responsibility to participate in public life and exhort it according to Gospel values."

Pacheco also said the clergy were afraid to get involved in politics for fear they might be accused of party politics.

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Corrections

IN THE JULY 8 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Cebuan among rival to extraprimary rule"—misspelled the last name of a party-list representative. Her name is Rosa...not Rosa...Rosario.

IN THE JULY 9 ISSUE, Anna L. Morato's Viewpoint column on Page A12 of the Opinion section—"Rebuilt by unity"—misspelled the names of two despots in the...Their names are Ramon Magsaysay and Marcos Cojuangco—not Ramon Emperado and Marcos Cajuala.

IN THE JULY 10 ISSUE, the editorial on Page A12 of the Opinion section—"Unsolved crimes"—said as of the number of casualties in the recent spate of bomb attacks in Cotabato City, Iligan City and Jolo A total of eight people—not 21—were killed in the bombings.

IN THE JULY 11 ISSUE, a story on Page A13—"Cotabato City closes shop for a day"—misstated the number of deaths in the July 3 bomb attack in Cotabato. A total of six people—not eight—died in the attack.

IN THE JULY 13, a Business article on Page B2-4—"IBM aims for a level of global technology play"—misstated the identification of Sanjeevan, member of the Board of Directors of IBM Philippines, as an abbreviation and misspelling. It is subsequent references as Sanjeev.

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a Lifestyle article on Page B5 carried the wrong headline. The headline should have read "Four Japanese classical musicians to July 14 concert"—not "Four Japanese classical musicians in July 15 concert."

The Daily Gospel

Wednesday, July 15, 2009
15th Week in Ordinary Time
Benincasa

1st Reading: Is 1:10-17
Gospel: Mt 11:25-27

On our occasion from said, "Father, lord of heaven and earth, I praise you, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to simple people. Yes, Father, this is the pleasing way.

"Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Commentary

On this day Moses was consoling the people of God. He was a Truth Well-prepared for he, in fact, wasn't leaving them. Moses was afraid because he realized it was God speaking to him. God was calling him to service. He assured Moses to be the leader of the Israelites and help their away from slavery in Egypt to serve God in the Promised land. Moses really wanted to, but finally he realized he could not turn down God's call to serve Him.

In Christians, we are called to serve God by our daily actions and disappointments. And, as we all know, we are to serve Him. Jesus Christians are called into special areas of work for God and become partners in missionaries. But every Christian is called to serve him at home, at school, at work or play. We can serve God no matter where we are. When we approach God, we recognize His greatness, His holiness, His authority. When God gives us an assignment, He provides the resources and strength we need. It's not just up to us. It is God who does the work through us. When didn't Jesus preach Our God?

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GMA names Sabban as new Marines commandant

By Tarra Quismundo

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has chosen another "outside" to lead a major military command, naming Brig. Gen. Juanito Sobban as commander of the Philippine Marines.

Sobban, a member of Mrs Arroyo's adoptive Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1978, headed Task Force Comet, the military's joint antiterrorism unit, based in Sulu.

Sobban's appointment on Monday came two days after Indian aid worker Eugenio Vagni was released by Abu Sayyaf kidnappers.

Sobban will replace Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino during a ceremonial turnover ceremony on Friday, according to Lt. Col. Bernan Brawner Jr, Armed Forces spokesperson.

Dolorfino will take over the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), one of the basic military unified area commands because of their active campaign against terrorism and insurgency in Mindanao.

Dolorfino will succeed Lt. Gen. Nelson Allaga, who will retire tomorrow upon reaching the age of 56 years.

Touched by the honors for someone last night in Manila, Dolorfino, a two-star general, said in a text message that "there is no promotion or demotion to assignments."

Dolorfino viewed his new post as a promotion since it was actually held by three-star generals.

Being Westmincom chief is "heroic," he said, since he could perform as "ground operator," directly supervising his men.

Sobban "is the most senior among the Marines for the position," Brawner Jr. said, explaining that deliberations were on long before Sobban was tasked in securing Vagni's release.

Nominations were through the Armed Forces' Board of Generals, Department of National Defense and, finally, Malacañang, Brawner Jr. said. Sobban, he said, was among those on the short list.

"We're expecting that General Sobban can do a good job as commander of the Philippine Marine Corps. He has done a good job as commander of Task Force Comet and, of course, was chief of staff, [Gen.] Victor Ibrado, has full trust and confidence in him," the military spokesperson said.

Sobban was known to have taken part in the December 1989 coup attempt against then President Corazon Aquino, alongside his cadet mates Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, as members of the Young Officers' Union. Lim is now detained on rebellion charges.

But the military believes in second chances, Brawner Jr. said. "Everybody is given another chance. ... There might have been instances in the career where he might have gone against military rules and regulations, but everybody's given an equal chance to prove himself."

In May, one of Ms Arroyo's most favorite generals, Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit, became chief of the Philippine Army, the largest military service command.

The assignment was widely believed to be preparatory for his eventual ascent to the military helm, by election season next year. *With a report from Jaime B. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

THE WAY IT WAS Vagni seems to be recounting his six-month ordeal to (fr) Gen. Juanito Sobban (left), Task Force Comet chief, and Marine Lt. Gen. Nelson Allaga after his courtesy call on President Arroyo at the Palace. PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO

Amnesty for Abus urged; Gordon proposal gets Vagni support

Front page A2

life, I never hurt anybody or you."

Vagni said it was up to the government to decide if a number of pirates the Abu Sayyaf bandits responsible for a series of kidnappings and beheadings in recent years but added that "hope should not die to that part of the world."

Vagni was kidnapped with fellow ICRC workers Andreas Notter of Switzerland and Mary Jean Lacaba of the Philippines on Jan. 15 while on a mission to improve water and sanitation facilities at the Jolo provincial jail.

Lacaba was freed in April, while Notter escaped days later.

PRESIDENT ARROYO meets ICRC worker Eugenio Vagni during his courtesy call in Malacañang on Tuesday. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

The worst moments

Vagni did not rule out returning to the Philippines to work. "I love the Philippines. I love the Filipino people," he said.

The Indian was to leave shortly for Geneva to report at the ICRC headquarters before proceeding to his home in Tuscany. "I want to find myself again, the way I was before. Then I will decide," he said.

He message to the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf is a plea to return to normal lives.

Vagni said his kidnappers told him on Saturday that he was going home. He said he did not believe them, noting that they had joked about it in the past.

"There were times when I felt I was in danger," he said. "The worst moments were the encounters," he said.

Over a dozen soldiers were killed in the pursuit operations. The leader of the kidnappers, Albader Parad, lost his two brothers, along with several others, in the clashes with the government troops.

Throughout his 179-day captivity, Vagni said he kept tearing in thoughts of his family during the more stressful times.

Thoughts of family a lifesaver

"I guess for anybody in this situation, there is something that comes out naturally and that is survival," he said.

To raise his spirits, Vagni said he would often meditate and think about the good times with his family. His door phone calls to his Thai wife, Khun Siwan, and three baby daughter were a lifesaver, he said.

"My wife would say we are waiting for you, you have to come back to us," he said.

Vagni said he was happy that his 2-year-old daughter could now speak and call him "bahbo," the Italian for "papa." He could also speak "I love you" in Italian to his wife.

Appearing healthy shaved and in a brown suit, Vagni appeared calm and composed, recalling he survived on a diet of rice and fish, dodging bullets and longing for his family, until the calls seemed to bear fruit.

"Oh, no, no, no," he said when asked if the ransom did not make it to the European Champions League, a coveted event among legions of Italian soccer fans.

Troops pursuing kidnappers

Although the government was considering Gordon's amnesty proposal, Ermita said the military was pursuing the kidnappers in Jolo.

"We would continue with our strategy of right hand and left hand effort of providing, of pressuring them through military operations for those who fight the government and also give opportunity for development and for the rebels to return peacefully," he said.

Mayantoc Rep. Rufino Biazon said that the Abu Sayyaf was a criminal group and granting them amnesty would go against the government's policy of not negotiating with terrorists.

"If they want to go back to the fold of society they should just surrender and not seek amnesty," Biazon said.

Pantaleon Rep. Refin Tejada said: "It's amnesty proclamation which the President is supposed to issue in respect to the concurrence of Congress should be only for those accused of political offenses not for kidnapping, murder, arson, beheadings."

Cebu said that the government should not even think of holding peace negotiations with the kidnappers because it would only result into the proliferation of terrorist gangs going out to kidnap only to get amnesty after keeping their hard earned money. *With reports from* CHRISTINA MENDEZ, ANDREA CALAMBA, DJ ANDAL AND AP

BAHAY LIFTED The travel ban for the UN World Food Program personnel is lifted on Monday and people rush to the tiny town plaza of Sara Duterte Simuan in Maguindanao to claim 50 kilos of rice imported from Thailand as part of the food aid. Each sack is intended for four families. The travel ban was imposed after a series of bombings last week. MINDANAO NEWS AND INFORMATION OFFICE

'Load' life 'tripled' starting on Sunday

Front page A2

parents believed.

The commission earlier justified its years of inaction, saying that a temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by a Quezon City judge had blocked an MTC memo that set the guidelines on billing statements, anti-and use of prepaid cards, and transconnection agreements.

Investigate judge

At the hearing, MTC Commissioner Rodolfo Casadiego said the TRO had already expired.

The chief lobe of results of P13.3 in 2008 will be extended from zero to five days to 15 days. More than P80 to P480, 30 days; more than P500 to P980, 60 days; and more than P980 to P1,000, 75 days.

Senate, who presided over the hearings on disappearing cell phone loads, said the hearings had brought concrete results.

"With this, our money will no longer disappear as if they just evaporated or expired. This is a good output of the hearings," he said.

'Excessive profits'

Senate said the Senate would not allow that the money of consumers would just disappear and that telcos would earn excessive profits. "Profits are OK but they should not be excessive," he said.

Globe Telecom posted a consolidated net income of P13.3 billion in 2008, while PLDT's consolidated wireless service revenue amounted to P83.8 billion.

There are some 75 million mobile phone subscribers in the Philippines.

End of text spam

On "text spam," Casiño said subscribers would no longer be bombarded with messages unless they subscribe to these persons first.

"So starting July 15, we'll see an end to these 'promo promos' that we did not ask for but keep on coming even if we had not subscribed to them," Roxas said.

"All promos will first need our subscription. It will no longer be that they will keep sending us these messages without us knowing what is happening," the senator said.

However, Casiño said that those who were already "subscribed" should honor their subscription until its ends.

Drop calls

Casiño also said that MTC technical working group was coordinating with the telcos on how to charge subscribers in cases "drone seconds per pulse" for short calls.

Currently, telcos charge subscribers "per minute" even for drop calls or calls that lasted 10 seconds or less than a minute, Roxas said.

Rodolfo Ishikiriat, Globe Telecom chief legal officer, and Jimmy Ibarra, Smart Communications public affairs chief, raised the possibility that a "flag down" rate be imposed for such call.

Roxas said the NTC should study this carefully especially after Ishikiriat noted that subscribers in other countries that have a "flag down rate" actually pay "two to three times" more than what Filipinos were paying.

Selling numbers

Ibarra said the telcos should investigate their marketing officers for allegedly selling the cell phone numbers of subscribers to the retail "consumer providers," or the firms responsible for cell phone promos.

Ishiriat said this was prohibited, but his officials said it was happening.

"This is not serious going on in just one organization, so please tell us. Dry [contract] an also shocked by representatives of some marketing people and they have become immensely affluent because of this," Estella said. *With a report from Inquirer Research*

SC asks 3 expert groups to comment on poll deal

Front page A2

ment last week, calling the project "misguided and ill-conceived."

Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said the high tribunal has voted to issue any restraining order but will hear oral arguments against the contract.

The high court directed the University of the Philippines Computer Center (UPCC), National Computer Center and International Institute for Foundation of the Philippines (IIFP) to comment on the accuracy and reliability of the consortium's automation system.

"They will be given copies of the petition and the annexes. They will be asked to file their comment. They are also invited to attend the oral arguments," Marquez said.

The UPCC's "open election system" is part of the proposal made by the COM to abrogate then that may be used by the Comelec in a partially automated election scheduled next year.

The IIFP on the other hand, was one of those who opposed the P1.2-billion Mega Pacific computerization deal that was scuttled by the court prior to the 2004 presidential election because of irregularities in the bidding process.

The petitioners, led by administration critic Harry Roque, cited violations of the automation law by the Comelec and Smartmatic-TIM, including Comelec's failure to pilot test the consortium's machines.

They said Republic Act No. 9369 required that the system should first be tested in two highly urbanized cities and two provinces each in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Margin of error

The petitioners added that the machines failed to meet the 0.005-percent error margin required by the law.

Roque said a check on Smartmatic's website revealed that the machines have an error margin of 2 percent to 18 percent.

A margin of error of 2 to 18 per cent translates to 1.5 million to 13 million votes, Roque said, pointing out that in the 2004 balloting, President Macapagal-Arroyo won by 1 million votes.

Roque said there was still time for the Comelec to prepare for the postponement, since even through the "open election system" proposed by COCC, or tossing other automation technologies.

Comelec Chair Jose Melo expressed confidence that the court will eventually junk the petition.

"We will able to answer all the arguments. We know the truth and we are right," he said. *With a report from Kristine L. Alave*

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

We at Pfizer are deeply concerned by the accusations of bribery in recent news reports. We categorically deny this allegation and consider this a grave affront to our reputation.

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In our desire to have more Filipinos benefit from Pfizer's high-quality medicines and patient care program, we have volunteered to partner with the Department of Health to offer Sulit cards to 5 million more patients in national and local government hospitals and community health centers by the end of the year.

These discussions began in May 2009, prior to the announcement of the list of products subject to Maximum Retail Price. **We are saddened that our sincere desire to help has been misconstrued as bribery.**

We all share in the common goal of a healthier Philippines.

Together with the industry, we have initiated meetings with government agencies to dialogue on possible solutions to address access to medicines with full transparency. At Pfizer, we believe that more can be achieved through working in partnership and will continue our efforts to find solutions through constructive engagement with all stakeholders.

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Sandigan affirms ex-general's conviction

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE SANDIGANBAYAN FIFTH DIVISION has affirmed a perjury conviction of former military comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia who previously was three-star police general, even as he remains charged with plunder for allegedly amassing some P522 million in ill-gotten wealth.

In a resolution released yesterday, the 4th Division denied Garcia's motion for the court to reconsider its Feb. 16 decision finding him guilty of lying about his assets in his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) for 2000.

The court affirmed the conviction of Garcia who was found guilty of perjury for not declaring his wife Clarita's two cars as well as a P7-million deposit with the Armed Forces and Police Savings and Loan Association Inc. (AFPSLAI) in his SALN.

GARCIA

Motion for reconsideration

In his motion asking for reconsideration of his February conviction, Garcia cited the dismissal of his cases in the 2nd and 3rd Divisions which involved allegations similar to his SALN for 1998 and 1999.

Garcia also said the Supreme Court had affirmed the 3rd Division's ruling.

In May 2008, the 3rd Division acquitted Garcia of the perjury charge. In April 2008, he was acquitted of a second perjury charge.

Three acquittals

Last June 18, Garcia was acquitted by the 1st Division of a third perjury charge involving his 1997 SALN, saying the Ombudsman failed to prove he deliberately lied.

In its ruling released yesterday, the 4th division said the factual issues involved in the 2000 SALN case were different from those tackled in the 2nd and 3rd divisions.

It said that while the two previous cases only questioned Garcia's nondisclosure of vehicles registered in the name of his wife, the 2000 SALN case involved the nondisclosure of his deposits with the AFPSLAI.

Dismissed argument

The court also dismissed Garcia's argument that his guilt was not proven beyond reasonable doubt because the SALN form under question did not indicate the date and had not been filled under oath.

The court said it took these two issues into "considerable attention and utmost caution," but said they did not prove that the form was not a sworn document.

No room for doubt

"The very existence of the subject SALN leaves no room for doubt as to its existence and it bears much weight in proving the correctness of the act in question," the court said.

It also noted that while he questioned the SALN form, Garcia "made no positive assertion that he did not sign the document or that the signature was not his."

Garcia also never claimed that the form was false, the court said.

Garcia is detained in the Philippine National Police Custodial Center in Camp Crame.

He is still facing plunder charges along with his wife Clarita and sons Ian Carl, Juan Paulo and Timothy Mark, who are detained in different states in the United States following their arrest after years of being fugitives. The government has requested their extradition so they can return to face the charges against them.

Immigration rakes in ₱1B in 1st 6 months

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION raked in more than a billion pesos in revenue during the first six months of the year despite the drop in tourist arrivals brought about by global economic crisis.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan made the announcement during a command conference over the weekend with immigration area directors in Cebu City where the bureau's top field officials pledged to meet their revenue targets.

Libanan said he was pleased that the bureau still managed to surpass its income target in the first half even if there were fewer foreigners who entered the country during the period and an increase in immigration fees was implemented.

He also urged bureau officials who attended the meeting to "work harder amid these difficult times" so the bureau can help the government raise more revenue to fund its pro-poor projects.

In a press statement, the bureau said that from January to June this year, immigration collections totaled P5.045 billion, which is 11 percent more than the agency's target of P926 million in the first half and 957 million higher than its take in the first half of 2008.

The bureau registered its highest revenue in January when it collected more than P204 million, a big leap over the target of P193 billion for the month.

The bureau said this was significant considering that foreigner arrivals dipped to 1.2 million compared with the 1.3 million in the same period last year.

Americans topped the list with 292,480 arrivals, followed by Koreans who numbered 213,131. Also in the top 10 list were Japanese, 140,665; Chinese, 94,463; Australians, 35,235; Canadians, 33,468; Filipinos, 31,831; Taiwanese, 26,277; Malaysians, 25,213; and Germans, 27,306.

If you're headed for Saudi...

IF YOU'RE AN OFW headed for Saudi Arabia, be sure to keep your mobile phone, laptop or other data-storing electronic device protected, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) chief Rosalinda Baldoz said.

The Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) group Migrante Middle East said yesterday that some authorities in the kingdom were using special devices to scan for pornographic material in cell phones and laptops of inbound migrant workers.

"Clean your electronic devices and make sure there are no forms considered violative of Saudi Arabia's prescribed cultural beliefs and practices," Migrante ME regional coordinator Julia Gumael Mendoza said in a hotel in the Saudi capital Riyadh, told OFWs in a statement.

Jerome Aning

PNR RENEWAL The government spent about P1.5 billion to rehabilitate the deteriorating railway system (at left). The first class section features reclining seats (at right). Eighteen coaches were made available by Korea and 30 more are being repaired by a local joint-venture manufacturing company. Later in the year, the trains will ply the Manila-Bicol route in its glory days. INQUIRER

PNR back on track with new trains from Korea

Turn to page A2

The President inaugurated the rehabilitated train system, which is planned to run seven times a day from its Metro Manila base in Caloocan to Bicol in Malinao.

Later this year, trains will begin plying the Manila-Bicol route.

Work still to be done

By Mr Arroyo's own admission, the PNR still needs a lot of work before its facilities and service can be considered world-class.

"She told us to still improve on the surroundings, to beautify them further," PNR Chair Michael Defensor told reporters after the 30-minute ride from the Tutuban station in Manila to Buendia in Makati City.

Mr Arroyo apparently was not blind to the system that would have greeted commuters once the PNR began formal operations next week.

Gone were most of the toilets and utilities (called "squatters" in the old days), many of whom used to dispose of their garbage by hurling bags of it onto the road or passing trains.

Still, the sight of broken concrete, vandalized walls and piles of rubbish throughout the commute could not be ignored.

Affordable rates

The PNR trains will run from Caloocan and proceed to Alabang, Biñan, Blumentritt, Tutuban, Laguna, Espana, Santa Mesa, Buendia, Paco, San Andres, Pitx Cruz, Bacoor, Dasmariñas, Bicol, Ilaya, PTI, Binondo, Sucat and finally Alabang, with a 10-minute waiting period at each stop.

For their initial operations, the trains will ply only from Caloocan to Pasay. The Alabang terminal is not yet available because the government has just relocated the informal settlers in the area, Defensor said.

The Tutuban-Ayala commuter will run only P30, he said, adding:

"We would like to make this as affordable as possible.

"Our thrust now is—as we have new PNR, lalo na the tracks—we would like to have a very strong private sector push. It's not for us to run this railway. It's not for the government to run this railway. We would like to have a contracting effort."

According to Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, authorities are looking into the possibility of a single ticketing system for all train systems.

Defensor said the SM Group might later come in and "take care of the stations."

Costs

Per Defensor's estimate, the government spent around P1.5 billion to rehabilitate the railway system.

He said 18 coaches were made available by Korea and 30 more were being repaired by Inauteca, a property manufacturing company.

Defensor described the Korean coaches as commuter trains similar to those to use by the Metro Rail Transit (MRT), which, with their wide aisles, can hold from 120 to 180 passengers.

But with commuters sitting on a fixed median and facing each other, the coaches may not be feasible for long-distance travel.

The refurbished cars—with seats and comfortable leg room similar to those in a plane's business class section—are more suited for the long Bicol route that can last up to six hours, Defensor said.

He said fixing old trains was less expensive at P5.3 million per coach than purchasing a new one at P100 million.

Long-term goal

Defensor said the long-term goal was to develop a railway system not unlike those in New York and Rome.

The idea is not far-fetched, he pointed out, especially with the impending connection of the MRT with the Light Rail Transit Line 1.

Defensor said there was also a plan to put up "a highway on top of a railway" to connect the North Luzon Expressway and the South Luzon Expressway.

"It will be shorter, and their cost will be less," he said.

PARTYING ORDERS The President instructs PNR Chair Mike Defensor to "improve the area" after she tries out a new coach rolling out on rehabilitated track next to Tutuban, Tondo, Manila. NONOY ESPINA

Not me, says doc accused of leaking GMA health file

Turn to page A2

hospital had "no access to the files or to the computers."

"They do not have passwords," he said. "Only the members of the accredited staff do, and they can open anybody's files. I mean anybody."

3 named accused

A source at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) had earlier said that members of the hospital staff, whose statements were taken by the bureau, named Reyes as the one who had ordered them to open Dr Arroyo's medical file.

"We're contributing key motive for asking for a copy of the President's records when she was not involved in [Dr Arroyo's] medical checkup," said the source, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to discuss the matter publicly.

Morning of July 2

Reyes, a member of two and a candidate of Dr Arias Hospital, was busy offering to a patient on the morning of July 2, when she was alleged to have ordered the opening of Mr Arroyo's medical file, Lucindo said.

"Dr. Reyes categorically denied the accusations of those three accredited staff. In fact, we presented a timeline which will show that it was impossible for her to open the file because she was with a client at that time," the lawyer said.

Dr Reyes—withdrawn as a witness by her lawyer, a hospital staff member informed her at around 10:30 or 10:45 a.m. that there was a call from the billing section inquiring about the pap smear procedure conducted on the President and her daughter.

She said she asked one of the staff members if any of them was present during the procedure, and that when she was answered in the negative, she told the staff member to verify it.

"It was then that the staff member opened the file of the President," Lucindo said. "But my client will stand by it—that she told the staff to verify the information first."

According to Lucindo, there were inconsistencies in the statements of the members of the hospital staff.

"Two of them claimed that the call from the billing section [came] at 11:50 a.m. It's impossible because at that time, Dr. Reyes was already out of the hospital," Lucindo said.

"I believe there was a collusion among them. Maybe they opened the file knowing that the President is a big-time person," he said.

File remained open

Asked why he thought his client was being singled out, Lucindo said the staff members were "probably pointing to the Center for Women's Health because the file of the President remained open there for long."

He added: "They were pointing to my client because she was the only doctor at the OWH at that time, and although they have access to the files, maybe they read, and just saw that they don't have the authority to open [the files].

"Their problem was their log-ins were erased. That's why they are pointing the blame on anybody else. Perhaps they fear being fired."

Lucindo also said Reyes, who is in her early 40s and has been with Arias Hospital since its inception seven years ago, was not part of the team that attended to the President.

"The operationally presented itself, this was in the wrong place at the wrong time," Lucindo said in the course of lamenting that Reyes was the only doctor subpoenaed by the NBI.

But he said he was "very confident that our client is not the source of the leak."

"We are aware that—ready to face any case and [any] charges," he said, adding that he said his client had been informed that the hospital was now relying on computer system.

Liability

SM Director Senior Manuering had confirmed in an earlier interview that the bureau was looking into the leak on Mr Arroyo's hospital records.

But it was Arias Hospital, and not Manuering, who requested the inquiry, he stressed.

"The NBI is conducting an investigation to determine the possible administrative liability of any of [the hospital's] employees in the leakage," Manuering said, adding:

"Medical files are confidential, and medical practitioners and employees are governed by a law on doctor-patient confidentiality.

"Medical records and bulletins should not be divulged without the consent of the patients. Investigations are trying to determine how the hospital files were downloaded."

Police spokespersons had initially denied—but subsequently admitted—reports in other newspapers that the President had breast implants done in the 1980s.

Cosmetic surgeon Dr. Raul Guerrero confirmed last week that Mr Arroyo underwent an emergency biopsy of a lump in her breast at Arias Hospital in Makati City during her confinement there on June 30-July 2.

But he declined comment on her breast implants.

SC upholds tax court ruling in PAL case

By Norman Bordadora

THE SUPREME Court has upheld a Court of Tax appeals decision that found Philippine Airlines exempt from paying the minimum corporate income tax under Presidential Decree 1590, otherwise known in the letter of its flag-carrier franchise.

The tribunal's Third Division on July 7 dismissed the Bureau of Internal Revenue's petition for review of the tax court's decision on August 2007 that nullified the BIR's demand that PAL pay over P272 million in minimum corporate income tax (MCIT) for the period of 2000 to 2001.

"Under the decision of strict implementation, the burden is upon the Commissioners on Internal Revenue to primarily prove that the new MCIT provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code] of 1997 clearly, unequivocally and unambiguously extend and apply to PAL, despite the latter's existing tax exemption," the Court said.

"Since the CIR failed to this regard, the Court is left with no choice but to consider the MCIT as one of 'all other taxes,' from which PALis exempt under the explicit 'provisions of its charter,'" it added.

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OPINION

Trip for nothing

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SEEMS TO have transformed into the crass, pretentious, social-climber Doña Victorina portrayed in Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere." When the director of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, Leon Panetta, kicked off his Asian tour, the President broke protocol to meet with him in Malacañang, a case of no even head of state having a few minutes of her position. The CIA chief isn't even a member of the US president's cabinet; he is, to the official schemas of things, not a high-ranking official—and certainly not one who is entitled to meet a head of state, particularly that of a friendly, allied nation.

We doubt if the Palace will be able to point to Panetta meeting any other Asian head of state or even senior minister in the other countries he is visiting. Not because these countries don't value their relations with Washington, but because official protocol exists to maintain at the very least the appearance of mutual respect, dignity and equality among governments, by keeping official meetings on a corresponding, equal level, among the officials concerned. The director of the National Intelligence Service Agency—not the national security adviser who has cabinet rank—is the local equivalent of the CIA director.

If Panetta had been designated as a personal envoy of Barack Obama, then the President could have transgressed this, craving as she obviously does, any sort of recognition by the American leader, but rather the Palace nor the US Embassy mentioned this. The Arroyo administration leaves no stone unturned to foster the impression it enjoys that grace and favor of Washington, after all.

Upon meeting the CIA director, the Palace announced that the President received an invitation to go to Washington for a tête-à-tête with Obama—an very short notice. The Palace, it should be recalled, poohpoohed rumors the Panetta visit was a sign of American unease over the 2010 elections, by saying it had been in the works for four weeks. Now the President of the Philippines has been given two and a half weeks to get her act together and scoot off to Washington.

Two possibilities are raised. The first is that when Washington snaps its fingers, Manila jumps, and so, the President's visit to Washington may be in the nature of a summons to explain herself or receive instructions, which makes her a small but energetic puppet indeed. The second theory is that the President has been such a pain that Washington decided to please her, but that what will transpire is yet another meaningless—and expensive—photo opportunity at Filipino taxpayers' expense.

The Palace should not spare on the claptrap of this being "a very important milestone for our diplomacy abroad," and that the President's July 30 visit is "a great honor for the country and a recognition of our country's importance." Only the unimportant think about their importance. Only the world-climbing but still obscure chafe up the low-level meeting possible (the President will not be going on either a state or working visit) as a "milestone."

Such bombastic language is particularly unconvincing considering how the President's own father was willing to sacrifice a Washington state visit (which all Philippine presidents crave as a sign of status) to show his displeasure over the US Congress' handling of Filipino veterans' pensions. This is much ado about nothing. A trip for nothing.

The Obama administration has made reversing the Bush administration's penchant for interfering in foreign governments a centerpiece of its foreign policy. The severe gringo-ism in Honduras provides a good example of how this works. It reportedly cautioned the Honduran military against conducting a coup, and when the coup was launched anyway, Washington moved in lock-step with regional and global opinion in condemning it and imposing sanctions.

So far as any possible plans the administration may have then, it's logical to conclude Washington is inclined to keep a hands-off attitude toward domestic Philippine politics. Manila would only trigger a Washington response if it behaves in a manner that scandalizes global public opinion—in which case, Obama will most likely adopt the international consensus.

Or has our President become so hard-headed that she needs Obama himself to tell her this?

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Tourism is key to Mindanao progress and peace

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

SEN. RICHARD GORDON, CHAIR OF THE Philippine National Red Cross, does not believe that an all-out war against the Abu Sayyaf will eliminate kidnapping and lawlessness in Mindanao. Even if you kill all the Abu Sayyaf, he said, others will take their place for as long as "economic poverty" (emphasis on "economic") is not eliminated. Similarly, he insisted on the people by poverty. They have no jobs, no other means of livelihood, no food for their families, no future. The only thing they have are their guns. So they resort to kidnappings and other forms of banditry. Why do Lanao del S. "hayli ng pasaltan" (dangerous shoot-out) and Maguindanao "hayli ng kidnap"?

Indian engineer Bantosalan Ammani de Hanel, who was instrumental in having Indian Red Cross worker Eugenia Vagnozzi released by the kidnappers, agrees with Gordon. The two were guests at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday, along with Armel Cabelin, Philippine Red Cross chairman of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Jie Hanel said it was the promise of more development assistance, not the payment of any ransom, that convinced the kidnappers to release Vagni. (The government has denied any payment of ransom, but rumors to the effect persist.) Dr. Noel's private American foundation has a good track record of helping Muslims in Mindanao for years, giving them carabaos, cattle, hand tractors, and other assistance. Dr. Noel is a naturalized Filipino citizen and has been in the Philippines for 30 years.

He said he talked to Abu Sayyaf commander Albader Parad's core wives, Ruwena Ahaas and Sawsina Asmodim, who had been arrested at a military checkpoint, and told them that if Vagni was not released, his foundation would discontinue its projects. Such action, he said, leaves other humanitarian organizations in Jolo.

Gordon said tourism development and promotion are the key to progress in Mindanao. Again other has not been able to do that, except for the big hotels and pineapple plantations. Trip officials in Manila have not bothered to go to Mindanao even to promote tourism, he said. If they had, they would have seen how little progress tourism is in Mindanao unless it is not safe to go there? And how will peace come to Mindanao if there is no progress? It's a vicious cycle.

Gordon's answer to Peace tourism on Mindanao if we have to, it can be done. Instead of using the military and police to hunt down and kill the outlaws, use them to protect tourists. Implies the Muslims in the countries inhabited by only Christians. Promote Muslim culture. The Muslims have a very colorful culture, much richer than the culture introduced here by the Spaniards and Americans, and dispelled belief that Muslims cannot be trusted and are warlike. We have to show that it is not true that we are not what they could not conquer the Muslims. And anyway, the Muslim culture would be attractive to tourists.

Also, until now Christian Filipinos still think of Muslims the same way the Americans looked at Indians: as to think. Gordon said, it is time we changed that way of thinking. They are our brothers. We should treat them as brothers.

* * *

Senator President Juan Ponce Enrile is right. The caller to President Macapagal-Arroyo by multinational pharmaceutical company Pfizer to distribute P9.00 million worth of discount cards in exchange for not issuing an executive order fixing medicine prices was a bribe attempt.

In the first place, the Cheaper Medicines Act was passed by Congress and no mere whim. It mandates the President to issue an executive order lowering the prices of medicines. It does not give her the option not to issue one if the pharmaceutical companies voluntarily lower those prices. If she doesn't issue the order, she would be violating the law. There is no consideration between price controls and a voluntary lowering of prices.

In the second place, if the multinationals can lower their prices, why have they not done so until now when the government is on the verge of imposing price controls? That can only mean that they have been overcharging Filipinos all along.

Recovery for Cory, recovery for all

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO STOLE A powerful pun during a special Mass for the healing of Cesarean Aquino in Malacañang. In the private rebuff appeared to see from pop. and Saturday she is kneeling and receiving the host from the priest's hand. Behind her, various parishioners watch, their faces right to the left. Palace Digest. Nothing happened where GMA took the holy wafer in her hands and put it in her mouth. I do not know if the Catholic Church took a survey afterward about the number of Catholics that suddenly turned Muslim—Muslims because of that.

Well, I had been wondering when Malacañang would get into the act. Or how specifically, when it would get to re-steal the decades, or sum, from those who had been keeping up, if for the sitting history, and perfectly legitimate, questions, begging between one husband. If her cavity much stolen story thing else. And this one is not about to steal.

Nothing is more vulnerable to theft. You can't very well tell people, particularly those who have power over everyone's temporal lives, to please, please, not pray for a loved one who is fighting for life less because decide to rescue the loved one from such earthly oppression. Cory's sin and friends, as well indeed as Cory herself, are too polite for that. They are too polite to say, "why don't you just pray for your husband?" in hopes of producing that very effect. Which they couldn't say because of the effort they simply ignored it. But I wouldn't put it past the people who are bold enough to say Manny Pacquiao wins his fights because of their prayers to say Cory won her last one because of theirs.

Now, however something you can say to GMA when she takes on the part of praying for Cory to heal. Something indeed Cory and/or her kin can say to her while maintaining grace and graciousness and gratefulness. That is, that if the current nine-day wants to pay homage to her former benefactor, there is no point to say "professional," presuming in that does legitimate succession—then all she has to do is follow Cory's example. If the incumbent wishes to pay homage to the

Tough tests await new CBCP president

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

FOR ELECTION ON JULY 13 OF DAVAO CITY archbishop Nereo Odchimar to succeed Archbishop Angel Lagdameo as president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines came at a critical time in which the bishops will inevitably be dragged into controversies over and hot issues associated with next year's presidential election. Odchimar was elected by an overwhelming majority over the bishops' second archbishop nationwide, a result that the Catholic hierarchy released was meant to show it is unified as it faces challenges to its role in social and political issues that could test the Church's political statesmanship.

In an apparent effort to counter perceptions he was backed by conservatives that Odchimar was favored by Malacañang and friendly to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the bishops emphasized certain credentials of Odchimar that would mandate the bishops' keen suspicions of partisanship in the contentious issues that are likely to arise in the run-up to the election. Odchimar will succeed Archbishop Angel Lagdameo as CBCP president.

Malacañang quickly acted as if Odchimar's election was an indication that it had the bureaucrats in its pocket. The Palace could not contain itself from intervening in the bishops' affairs. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Archbishop Odchimar should be heeded. In a gratuitous statement, he said, "We should respect the voice of the bishops. They are our religious leaders, and they have the interests of the people [in mind.]" But the bishops do not need any reminder to tell the public that their problems public interest when they make decisions.

Former Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, an Arroyo ally, was less subtle and more blatant in tagging Odchimar as somebody who is friendly to the President. "Whenever the President goes to Davao, they eat together," Pichay said.

To deflect all these claims of Odchimar's alleged friendship with the President, the bishops emphasized the non-partisan elements of Odchimar, including the fact that he is a canon lawyer and a fervent campaigner against mining and logging.

Odchimar has been fighting illegal logging since he was installed bishop of Tandag in November 2005. In 2005, he opposed the lifting of the total log ban in two regions of Mindanao. In 2008, he opposed the grant of permits to 47 firms, which allowed mineral exploration.

His positions on political issues can be cast known, although it has been pointed out that he was among several bishops who urged the government in 2008 to abandon plans for constitutional change until after the 2010 election. The test of his political color is yet to come. The issues of alleged textbook of family planning to curb the population explosion, constitutional change, and street protests demanding President Arroyo's resignation will test his policy preferences.

The CBCP is one of the strategic social institutions in the country which are targets of intervention by the President in her attempt to influence decisions on issues related to constitutional change, the holding of elections in 2010, and imposition of a state of national emergency in times of violence. There were signs of overt Malacañang intervention in the CBCP election. There were reports that on the eve of the election, archdiocesan counselors in Davao City who cast P10,000 were offered, in a number of bishops. Some bishops were reported to have rejected the money which was being passed off as donations but believed to be intended to influence the election of the election. One bishop said he learned from his fellow bishops that they had accepted the envelopes on the assumption that these contained merely letters or project proposals from the Palace.

Some months ago, a scandal broke out when Malacañang personnel distributed envelopes containing cash in amounts ranging from P150,000 and P500,000 as compensation, presidential provisions and bonuses. Many of the recipients understood that the money was intended as accounts their support in classifying a move to change the Constitution in the President's favor. The Church has not been spared this method of obtaining support for political objectives of Malacañang.

The election of Odchimar comes against the backdrop of the policy statement of the CBCP during previous political crises when the Arroyo government was accused of the crime of collapse following the resignation of key Cabinet members. A pastoral letter issued by the CBCP helped to defuse the pressures on the President to resign. The letter is believed to have saved the government from falling.

On the issue of impeachment, the statement said.

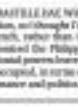
"We are undoubtedly for the search for truth. Therefore, in all sincerity we respect the position of individuals or groups that seek to continue using the impeachment process as active as truth.

"But we, bishops, reflecting and speaking together as a body, in the light of previous circumstances, we are not inclined at the present moment to favor the impeachment process as the means of re-establishing the truth, for unless the process and its rules... are guided by so-called neither that a process conveyor for the constitutional body, impeachment will since again serve as an unpredictable political exercise."

'Saba'?

I'M POSTING THIS ON BASTILLE DAY, WHICH COMMEMORates the French Revolution, so I thought I'd write a "what if" column. What if the French, rather than the Spaniards and the Americans, had colonized the Philippines? I've always been amazed at how colonial powers have such a lasting imprint in the places they occupied, in terms of language, food, architecture, even governance and politics.

To this day, the imaginary French Philippines, I asked the help of one of my overseas Filipino readers, Patricia Caballero, who now lives in France. In her comments, she and her husband, Claude, had some wonderful proposals about what could have happened.



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Claude thought that French colonizers would have built more on local culture and administrative structures than the Spaniards or Americans did. I couldn't agree more. The British, French and Dutch tended toward indirect rule, using native elites to manage the population. Of course, the situation in their home colonies was quite different from the Philippines because there were already well-developed feudal aristocracies for them to co-opt and build alliances with. In Indochina, we also had well-developed substrates in Hinduism; but the Spaniards were never quite able to subjugate these Muslim territories, in the era of the country there were areas not but they tended to control smaller areas. The French probably would have converted these areas and ruin (including Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo) would have been a true local official.

There could have been more though to French rule than the local elite being used as officials. The colonies were represented in the French national parliament, and Rizal and the other then-solo reformists wanted a similar arrangement for Filipino representatives in the Spanish Cortes. If Spain had agreed to that, who knows, maybe it would have defied some of the tensions in these areas, and delayed the Philippine-Jones issues.

There were other aspects of French colonialism that might have spelled a difference in the Philippines. While French missionaries would have been sent out here and they would have made some headway with conversions, they would have been less evangelizing than the Spaniards or Americans. If you look at French colonies throughout the world, the dominant religion is always the one that already existed when the French arrived, for example, Islam in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco and Buddhism in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Because their revolution was sparked in part by strong anticlerical feelings, the French just were not great fans of the separation of religious and state affairs, and talk constantly about issues of secularism.

That emphasis might even have affected the way we do it in work. Patricia describes "mission-oriented" labor" in France, where assimilation of workers' work into the General Solidarity, but without lacking from religious institutions.

Saba

Let's look into what might have happened culture-wise. Claude and Patricia thought we'd have better roads and wine (grandes) buildings, and again Cuisine. In Laos and Vietnam, I always enjoy walking around just looking at their old colonial houses, villas and buildings. Manila has some of that, but I think not nearly enough. Whether in architecture or interior design and fashion, would have been much better, but then again "taste" is always controversial.

Language was the area where I had a lot of fun in the correspondence with Patricia, who wondered if perhaps we'd be greeting each other with "Bonjour, Kumusta ka?" and "Merci" instead of "Magandang umaga? Salamat po." Patricia had this funny story to share: When she and her husband visited the Philippines and Claude greeted people with "Ca va?" they would answer, "Laloan." (For foreign readers: Sobe and laloan are carabao/cow/bull terms.)

Patricia wondered if we would have ended up with other mutated French words and expressions: Selfie bit Ceta to me (That's life!) and break the rules (huwag tayo mandate but more or less quite not). Maybe, too, we'd say "merp baby" for thank you, a contraction I use a lot.

We'd probably use French to tell time, refer to dates, and haggle in the market, because instead of vendors giving you the price "Fifty pesos, ma'am," They'd say, "Cinquante, s'il vous plait," or "Sinc ko" (short version" (Free expression), "then he'll bring out French Filipino version of Dyos ko (My God!).

I don't want to venture out in the labyrinth of new words and explosive we would have ended up with.

Historians don't usually like "what if" counterfactual because it gets too complicated. If we try to deal with a "what if the French had colonized the Philippines" scenario, we would also have to come up with two other alternations: one where Americans followed the French and one where they didn't.

On the other hand, thinking about the differences in colonial style can be useful. Patricia asked if we might have had a better French experience than the Americans, based on our 332 city maybe. Europeans generally had stronger public healthcare systems. Former British colonies did follow the British model in Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong have better health coverage than the Philippines, which followed the Americans with more of a private for-profit health care system.

Baguette

But enough of the western stuff! Let the imaginations run wild and imagine (and I'm drooling now from what I ate in Vietnam and Laos). We'd walk down two more friendly and connect with French cuisine. Who knows? Dinarai would have been replaced with baguette, and we'd have to say, "Would you like du Sulu (In French, it would sound nonsensical), "kind terrible" or "no trouble," but Ilo de Sulu is meant as a play on the Tagalog dalim ng sulay, under the bridge in Quiapo).

We'd pass little shops with French names (I loved this city subway map in Vietnam with stops with their names in French!). At the end of the day, walking home, we'd pop into one of those shops to pick up wine, cheese (gourmet queuing there—for tasting part), or go up to one of the authorities and then selling crepes, cooked right in front of you.

We'd probably have talcos a liking, too, to restaurants and, here you'd see French influences. Remember French bread, which we would beg us in Vietnam, from sidewalk hawkers, and then more on home, the baguettes tucked safely as in France, under the armpit.

But the best thing about home, we'd make one last stop with friends for a congenial cup of coffee—one of the many sidewalk cafés, where Filipinos have grown more French over time.

Maybe Filipinos would be even more romantic and we'd say a more often with flowers. Whatever, we'd certainly be even more expressive with our emotions. We'd greet each other with bise-bise (instead of beso-beso, because we'd be using the French) kiss on both cheeks, and we'd even feel more to start as well, in friendship or as partners in overseas adventures (amorous adventures, with a hint of the illicit).

Would we say goodbye with "a bientot"? Perhaps not; it doesn't sound quite right in the Philippines when pronounced, so it is spelled. The proper way is to drop the last letter "t"). Maybe, instead, we'd say "bien," from formal salons, and if the American did colonize us, "Bie, see ya."

Email: mtan@inquirer.com.ph

Baguio's object lesson

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

BAGUIO MARKS THE CENTENNIAL OF ITS founding on Sept. 1, and everyone, from the city government to businesses to ordinary citizens, is planning a project to ensure that the celebration is memorable.

As for back as August 2005, a group of former and present Baguio residents began discussing the concerns and thoughts of putting up an historical specimen museum. The group is led by Dida Angeles, former director general of the Commission on Human Rights and former secretary of foreign affairs), who grew up in Baguio and studied in Baguio schools. The other members of the board have likewise either grown up, studied or worked for many years in Baguio. Historian Carolina Benitez of the University of Cordillera, Teodoro Villabesa Jr., president and COO of Philex Mining; Amapola Daiel, former president of Lepanto Mining Co.; Haydn Cajayon of Searchlight Marketing Group; Ramon Ang, president of San Miguel Corp.; Hontoria, president of Union Galvasteel, The Lepanto Mining Group, Jaime Bautista, former Mining Secretary; Jaime Montemayor, mineral exploration manager of PHELPS DODGE; Jose Dorotheo, PR practitioner who grew up in Baguio and is part-Kankanay herself, and Maribel Ongpin, a leader whose family has long been based in Baguio.

As envisioned, the museum would feature the mining industry that built Baguio, the geology of the Cordillera, the other foundry industry, the Baguio Country Club, the Mansion, the history of the city—from schools like Brent, St. Louis University, public schools and post-war universities to hospitals like Notre Dame...and the growth of Baguio from a small mountain station to the city it is today.

The Baguio Historical and Mining Museum was organized in 2006 and hired the services of noted museum curator Marian Pastor Roces who conceptualized a virtual museum (or a Power Point presentation), including an open air geological garden.

* * *

FROM the start, it was determined that the museum would be a purely private, zero expenditure project. Funds would have to be solicited by donations from mining companies, foreign governments, individuals and cultural institutions. All the museum board asked from the city was a site on which to house it. "We weren't even asking for ownership," says Ongpin, "just permission to use the site."

Negotiations with the Baguio city government began in 2007, the start of what the board members call "The Curious Case of the Baguio Historical and Mining Museum vis-à-vis the Baguio City Council."

The search for a proper site led to many false leads, until some residents mentioned Dominican Hill, a former monastery and convent house of the Dominican order which was turned over to Baguio City in 2004 on condition that it would be used for arts or educational, cultural or tourism institution by April 2009.

Dominican Hill Homestay, a prominent landmark of Baguio, was built in 1914, one of the first concrete buildings there. It was built by Fr. Singer Bouchard, the founder of the UST Main Building. After decades of declining use, Dominican Hill was sold to faith healer Tony Agpaoa during his marital low years, and was used as a hospital for Agpaoa's "patients" who came from all over the country. When the faith healer failed to keep up with the payments, the Land Bank foreclosed the property and turned it over to the Ministry of Human Settlements. It was eventually taken over by the Presidential Management Staff.

* * *

AFTER the city government petitioned to take over the largely abandoned complex, Dominican Hill was turned over to the city's supervision, subject to the conditions set by the order. In the years since then, the building was allowed to fall into ruin, bereft of its remaining architectural features and exposed to the elements. It (the museum) finds Dominican Hill a natural venue for the museum, since it has ample space and already it is too late to present the city with a world-class, educational and comprehensive museum on Baguio's proud history, culture and heritage. But judging from this experience, well-meaning citizens will certainly think twice before embarking on a civic project, impelled by nothing but civic pride and good intentions.

Taylor's portrait of Mabini

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

APOLINARIO MABINI WILL BE REMEMBERED again next week in his birthplace in Batangas and at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Mabini campus in Manila where the original house where he died has been relocated from Nagtahan. Everyone knows that Mabini was a PMA (previous with disability), and that he is better known as the "Sublime Paralytic." Sometimes he is referred to as the "Brains of the Revolution," a title which was contested by no less than Andres Bonifacio's wife, Gregoria de Jesus, who insisted that it rightfully belonged to Bonifacio. Actually, Mabini was merely almost so in his "Heridades Decalogo" (This Dirge Legacy) that outlines 10 qualities of the ideal Filipino, and one would wish the people and nation he was to be realized.

It is unfortunate that Mabini is only remembered because of his wheelchair. Instead of a disabled body, Mabini was a simple man living in a complex time. He rose to become the most powerful person in the New Republic behind Emilio Aguinaldo, but because he had no stomach or talent for politics, he was removed from government and appointed to the Board of Censors for Theaters. Mabini was wounded before he was captured by the enemy and eventually exiled to Guam.

Mabini is a hero who demands renewed research because there are many bits of information that remain inside a hagiography to replace the pious, inspiring and prize-winning "Apolinario Mabini" biography written by late Cesar Adib Majul, first published in 1964.

Many years ago, I resided through a compilation of Mabini's letters hoping to find the man under the hero. His letters were serious and businesslike. Unlike the chatty letters of Rizal, his letters exhibited little humor or personal life. Among his letters, the only personal detail I remember was that he did not like canned meat. When he was a prisoner in Guam, he was served canned meat and he signed for it...and got peanuts instead.

Throughout his life he was devoutly religious, went to the prisoners to go into town and buy fresh meat, fruits and vegetables.

Before this was the National Library under Teodoro M. Kalaw published Mabini's essays in a two-volume work known as "La Revolucion Filipina," but even that yielded little of his person. Then, in discussions Mabini beyond the textbook bust one has to wade through obscure pro-war publications now available in Spanish. In this way I was pleased to discover what is probably one of the first short biographies of Mabini in English by Raoul Clark Taylor (Teresa Filipina/Philippine Review, April 1918). Taylor's work is introduced by H. Otley Beyer. His dove Dean printed sources and quoted at length those with interviews, months of Mabini's relatives and acquaintances. He described our hero as follows:

"Mabini was not imposing in appearance, it was through his personality that one discovered his greatness. He was of medium height and of a slender, delicate frame. He carried his head a little to one side; his head a considerable size, high forehead, and eyes which were penetrating yet not fiery. When he walked, he either looked straight ahead into space or gazed at the sky as a rule he wore the ordinary Filipino attire, was never well-dressed, and usually a simple black coat where he was in the law school. When guests he never wore smoking shoes, as he disliked them. His voice was full and resonant, and he spoke slowly and distinctly.

"Throughout his life he was devoutly religious, remaining during an entire Mass upon his knees. He was faithful to his friends and just to all his dealings with men. Too proud to accept assistance from anyone, he trusted always in his own strength. He spoke little and thought much. Thought out whole schools years of action, great thirst for action being thus, though some grew selfish and failed.

He had no love affairs. Once when in the Malabon college, he was heard to remark that a certain daughter of the rich' in Binondo was pretty, several times he called upon a distinguished lady of Binondo (1897). Not because of any fancy of his but some relations with women. In his belief that woman was a rare, self-centered creature, we may accept him of being conventionally correct-minded. Though he, too, was said to have admired beauty, but never to view of the fact that he felt a subjection to the charms of women. He was not the man easy to perform but also because he would not ask anyone to share his miserable existence, he never allowed himself to contemplate matrimony. Nevertheless we know that he must have appreciated, to some measure at least, the part it might play in the history of a Philippine nation."

Mabini died at the age of 39 in May 1903, victim of cholera resulting from drinking bad carabao milk. He did not die a forgotten man. Many attended his funeral, braving the threat of contamination and being placed on the watch list of suspected "insurrectos." The American government in Manila was convinced enough to open up.

Embarrassingly we do not commemorate Mabini as many as we should. His words are as sharp and relevant today as when they were first written. Unfortunately, many prefer to see him as prophetic but rather that Filipinos have not changed much since the time of the Revolution.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@inquirer.com.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Leyte will hereby, through its duly constituted Provincial Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), invite contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the following contract:

Name of Contract	Rehabilitation of 10KM Access Roads along Lim-ao-ganh-Bongo-Bulwang-Cabay-Dagami 1 to 2 Municipality along Palompon-Ormoc-Leyte Provincial Road
Location	Municipalities of Palompon and Dagami, Province of Leyte
Brief Description	Rehabilitation of 10KM Access Roads
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	PHP 10,000,000.00
Contract Duration	90 CD

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract they are competing for and must submit with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and latest tax clearance per Executive Order 398 (Eligibility Forms) available for the prospective bidders at the Provincial Engineering Office, Capitol Compound, Tacloban City. Interested contractors are also invited to Pre-Eligibility Conference on July 20, 2009 at 10:00 A.M. at the Provincial Engineering Office, Capitol Compound, Tacloban City.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Contents, the Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid/Bid Conference, Opening of Bids, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of EAC activities is as follows:

EAC Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and Bid Documents including Application for Eligibility	July 15, 2009 - July 31, 2009
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	July 15, 2009 - July 31, 2009
3. Deadline of Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	July 15, 2009 - 3:00 PM
4. Actions on Requests for Eligibility Check	August 1, 2009 - August 14, 2009
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	August 17, 2009 - 3:00 PM
6. Pre-Bid Conference	August 17, 2009 - 10:00 AM
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	September 1, 2009 - 10:00 AM

The EAC will issue a prospective contractor Eligibility Forms at Office of the EAC Secretariat, Mrs. Amelia A. Bustamante Provincial Accountant and Member Chairperson, Tacloban Capitol Compound, Tacloban City, Leyte upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Pesos only (P2,000.00) to the Provincial Government of Leyte as per Official Receipt Number. Prospective bidders shall submit accomplished Eligibility Forms to the EAC Secretariat within three days from the date of the Eligibility Check by the EAC or on the above deadline. There must be at least one (1) Eligibility Check per week.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any following forms:

1. Cash/Cashier's/Manager's check, bank draft/guaranty issued in the amount of one hundred (100%) of ABC which is PHP 500,000.
2. Bank guarantee at one & a half percent (1.5%) of ABC in the amount of Php 7,500.00 as attached in this Bid.
3. Surety bond callable upon first demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission and confirmed by the Provincial Government of Leyte, at the amount of thirty percent (30%) of the ABC which is Php 150,000.00.

The EAC will issue Bidding Documents only to Bidders determined by the EAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Ten Thousand Pesos only (P10,000.00) to the Provincial Government of Leyte as per Official Receipt.

The Province of Leyte, as owner reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and waive any informality or technicality, and to abandon any bid and contract proposal as deemed most advantageous to the Provincial Government of Leyte. All bidder shall have any obligation for any loss or expenses whatsoever incurred by the bidder in connection with the preparation and submission of their bid. The Provincial Government of Leyte do hereby guarantee that no award will be made.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **ANGELO L. KING**
PBAC Chairman

(FPJ - July 15, 2009)

KEPCO SPC
POWER CORPORATION

Invitation to Bid

KEPCO SPC Power Corporation (KSPC) invites interested parties to participate and submit bids for:

"The supply of steaming coal (330,000 Metric Tons/year) to a coal fired thermal power plant with a capacity of 2x105MW in Barangay Colon, Municipality of Naga, Province of Cebu, Philippines for 10 years"

The Bid Documents may be downloaded from www.kepcophilippines.com. Coal producers or marketing companies having long-term supply contracts with coal producers, are qualified to participate in the bidding.

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

• Bid Submission Deadline	July 28, 2009 (3 PM)
• Evaluation of Commercial & Technical Proposals	July 29-30, 2009
• Selection of First Negotiable Bidder	July 31, 2009
• Mine Site Visit	August 4-5, 2009
• Execution of Contract	August 5, 2009

Bids must be delivered to the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) in the office of KSPC as indicated in the address below no later than 5 PM of July 28, 2009. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Bond in accordance with the prescribed forms and amounts stated in the Bid Documents.

KSPC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Bids at any time prior to awarding of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

KEPCO SPC Power Corporation
15th Floor Citibank Tower, 8741 Paseo de Roxas,
Salcedo Village, Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No. (632) 845-0231-35, 37-38
Fax No. (632) 848-0610
E-mail: mec.sustria@kepcophilippines.com

(Sgd.) **HOON KIM**
President & CEO

(FPJ-June 17, 2009)

Industrialization as key to development

PHILIPPINE LETTERS

SONS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL candidates for the 2010 elections has mentioned industrialization as a plank of his or her platform of governance. This is tragic. Its country in the world has become prosperous without industrialization. Under an agri-oriented economy, people will be condemned to perpetual poverty. This is the lesson of history.

"In Europe and North America, countries had gone through a process, lasting in some cases more than a century, in which most workers had left agricultural land and asset and become industrial. ... This structural change was seen as the key element in rising incomes and national power." ("The End of the Third World: Newly Industrializing Countries and the Decline of Ideology" by Nigel Harris.)

In his book "The Reign of Greed," Dr. Jose Rizal, through the famous personages Don Filibusterismo, gave a trenchant piece of advice on how the Philippines could prosper. During a party thrown by a wealthy Chinese, a group of merchants who had been complaining just how bad business was, asked Simoun, a well-traveled gentleman, for his opinion on how the Philippines could prosper. "My opinion?" Simoun huffed. "Study how rich or industrial peoples, and then do as they do." (Translation by Charles E. Derbyshire.)

Rizal, who had been to Europe, the United States and Japan, knew that those countries were "advanced" precisely because they were industrialized. Japan, a latecomer, rose to the ranks of the advanced countries by studying how Europe and the United States conquered, and by copying them. The newly industrialized countries (NICs) like South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and China all followed the Japanese path.

The construction of the Lu-ing Hijduna church, Rizal founded, provided that "The introduction of machines and industries, new or necessary in the country, shall be favored." This policy was followed by the Commonwealth government, under President Quezon, and implemented by Quirino, Magsaysay and Garcia, until it was scrapped by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's father, Diosdado Macapagal, in favor of free trade, liberalization and privatization, dictated by the Washington Consensus and the IMF-World Bank.

Under the theoretical model devised by those free-market economists, one country has to be run of the heap. Under the regime of industrialization, or change controls and protection, as adopted by the industrial countries to various stages of development, the Philippines almost second only to Japan in economic growth in Asia.

We should learn to measure development by the results.

—MANUEL L. ALMARIO
opinion@...
Movement for Truth in History (Kilusan ng Katotohanan sa Kasaysayan)
info@movementforhistory.com

TRANSFER OF THE ISSUANCE OF IMPORT COMMODITY CLEARANCE

Joint Bureau of Product Standards (BPS) and DTI-National Capital Region (DTI-NCR) Memorandum Circular No. 09-02, Series of 2009

Subject : **Transfer of the Issuance of Import Commodity Clearance (ICC) from the Bureau of Product Standards to the DTI-National Capital Region**

Date : 9 July 2009

Whereas, under Department Administrative Order (DAO) No. 5, Series of 2008, the application, processing and issuance of Import Commodity Clearance are filed and approved by the Bureau of Product Standards or the DTI Regional/Provincial Offices;

Whereas, the DTI Regional/Provincial Offices, except the DTI National Capital Region are presently performing this function;

Whereas, it is the policy of the Department to devolve all frontline powers and responsibilities in the issuance of permits, licenses and clearances to the DTI Regional/Provincial Offices;

Therefore, the DTI-National Capital Region (DTI-NCR) and the Bureau of Product Standards (BPS), jointly issue this Implementing Memorandum Circular:

1. **Transfer of Issuance of Import Commodity Clearance from BPS to DTI-NCR**

   Effective 15 July 2009, the issuance of Import Commodity Clearance (ICC) is transferred from the Bureau of Product Standards to the DTI National Capital Region. The guidelines concerning the issuance of ICC are prescribed under DAO 5, Series of 2008 and its implementing rules and regulations.

2. **DTI-NCR Contact Information**

   Assistant Secretary Ma. Theresa Pelayo-Ty
   12/F Trafalgar Plaza Building
   105 H.V. Dela Costa Street
   Salcedo Village, Makati City
   Telephone Nos.: 811-8231-33 and 811-8367
   Fax No.: 811-8231
   E-mail Address: asecpelayo@dtincr.ph

3. **Status of pending Conditional Releases and ICC**

   The Bureau of Product Standards shall complete the processing of all Conditional Releases issued before 15 July 2009 to include product sampling, submission of samples to accredited laboratories, evaluation of test results and issue recommendation for the issuance of an Import Commodity Clearance to the DTI-NCR.

   The BPS shall stop issuance of Conditional Release and Import Commodity Clearance effective 15 July 2009. All unissued ICC but with complete documentation shall be endorsed to the DTI-NCR for issuance of the appropriate ICC and stickers.

4. **ICC Stickers**

   The National Printing Office (NPO) shall sign a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the procurement and supply of ICC stickers in accordance with the markings prescribed by DAO No. 5, Series of 2008 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. During the transition the current printing and issuance of ICC stickers shall continue.

5. **Transfer of Records and Personnel**

   BPS shall transfer the records, accountable forms, budget and other unlisted materials pertaining to ICC applications and clearances, as well as the detail or transfer of BPS personnel to DTI-NCR.

   During the transition and for as long as needed, Ms. Carmencita B. Magno, the Officer-In-Charge of the Standards Conformity Division will be the BPS point person to work closely with her DTI-NCR counterpart, Provincial Director Ernani M. Bernas of Area 4.

6. **Reassignment of BPS Personnel**

   A separate DTI Department Order pertaining to the transfer or detail of BPS Personnel to DTI-NCR will be issued as per civil service rules and regulations.

7. **Testing Laboratories**

   All testing laboratories accredited by the Philippine Accreditation Office and those recognized by the BPS are notified accordingly.

8. **Authorized Signatories**

   The DTI-NCR shall inform the Bureau of Customs of their authorized signatories of Conditional Releases and ICC effective 15 July 2009.

9. **Posting of the Memorandum Circular**

   This Memorandum Circular No. 09-02 will be posted at DTI website (DTI-NCR and BPS) and will be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

(BR - July 15, 2009)

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB NO.: 07-07-2009

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), a holding and integrated agency of the Government, is undertaking public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Name of Project : Lease and Operation of Bicutan Integrated CITY Complex

Description :

Lot No.	Area	Location/Address	Approved Zonal Classification	Minimum Bid Price
1	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
2	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
3	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
4	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
5	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
6	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
7	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
8	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
9	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
10	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
11	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
12	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
13	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
14	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
15	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
16	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
17	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
18	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
19	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month
20	1,000 sq.m.	Bicutan Road, Barangay Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila	Commercial	Minimum Bid Price of Php 50,000.00 per month

Name of Bank : Metrobank Foundation, Inc.
Branch : Bicutan Branch

Terms & Conditions:

1. Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with PAGCOR Bidding Guidelines and Procedures.
2. Bidding documents are available for purchase at the Cashier's Department at the Executive Building, 1st Floor, PAGCOR Compound, Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila from July 15 to July 28, 2009 only.
3. Prospective bidders may inspect the area subject of bidding on July 20, 2009 at 10:00 A.M. Interested bidders may contact Mr. Ramon Ramos at telephone number 888-8888 local 8888 for the schedule of inspection.
4. Bidding shall be conducted on July 28, 2009 at 10:00 A.M. at the Executive Building, 1st Floor, PAGCOR Compound, Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila.
5. Bidders shall submit their bids in a sealed envelope which shall be clearly labeled with the name of the project, lot number and the name of the bidder.
6. Bidders shall submit a Bid Security in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 10% of the Minimum Bid Price.
7. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
8. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.
9. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
10. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.
11. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
12. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.
13. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
14. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.
15. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
16. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.
17. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
18. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.
19. Bidders shall submit a Bid Bond in the form of a surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security bond in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 30% of the Minimum Bid Price.
20. Bidders shall submit a Bank Guarantee in the form of a Manager's Check or Cashier's Check issued by a bank duly accredited by the BSP in favor of PAGCOR in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the Minimum Bid Price.

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 15, 2009 - July 28, 2009
2. Pre-Bid Conference	July 20, 2009 (10:00 A.M.)
3. Submission of Bids	July 28, 2009 (10:00 A.M.)
4. Opening of Bids	July 28, 2009 (10:00 A.M.)

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Government. All costs incurred by the bidder in connection with the preparation and submission of their bid shall be borne by the bidder. The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation shall not be responsible for any loss or damage to the bid documents.

For more information, please contact:

(Sgd.) **ROMEO M. RAMOS**
Corporate Secretary

(PNA-July 15, 2009)

Jun Lozada is only a star witness

FOR THE PAST FEW months, I have noticed that the focus has been referring to Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada as the whistle-blower of the ZTE-NBN deal.

Correct me if I am wrong, but can't here do "Persons of the true whistle-blower of the billion-peso scandal? Doesn't "whistle-blower" mean the first person who reveals a scandal? If so, then Dr. Neneza rightly deserves the title.

It is not just a matter of semantics. Lozada was not the first to expose the scandal, he only supported all of Dr. Neneza's claims. Also, it was Dr. Neneza who supplied the documents on the scam.

I believe that the correct description of Lozada is "star witness" as he supported the allegations made by Dr. Neneza regarding the huge kickbacks that were to be received by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Comelec Commissioner Benjamin Abalos.

Former Neda director general Romy Neri can be considered a bonafide witness, as he supported both the testimony of Dr. Neneza and Lozada.

Dr. Neneza and Lozada are both brave men who risked much to inform the public of the widespread corruption within the Arroyo administration. One is the "whistle-blower." The other is a "star witness."

Since the inquiries is the country's leading newspaper, other papers may also emulate and ... [illegible] follow in lead. Both gentlemen deserve to be described accordingly.

—**DARWIN LEE**
4-F Pico Hills, Sitio Ilang-Ilang Road, Mabuhay City

INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Jon Bandayrel
Assoc. Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

REMEMBERING 1990 QUAKE

Scars of disaster deep in Bagong Sikat

By Tonette Orejas
Correspondent, City

NOT A PIECE OF DEBRIS IS left at the site where the building of the Christian College of the Philippines (CCP) collapsed after an earthquake of 7.9 magnitude rocked central and northern Luzon on July 16, 1990.

The area, situated at the heart of Cabanatuan City on Maria Icha, is left vacant, now serving as a pathway to a newly built school behind what used to be a one-story structure.

But even as markers remind that on that day, 154 people, mostly students, were pinned to death by crashing concrete mixtures after the ground shook violently at 4:26 p.m. (DST, daylight saving time; an hour ahead of the actual time).

Outside the compound, everything else looked normal on Saturday. No trace remained of the tragedy.

But go 11 kilometers east, to Barangay Bagong Sikat. One finds the psychological wounds, if not healed marks, of the 1990 disaster.

24 yards dead

In the village's unfenced cemetery are 13 graves laid to rest after the strike, each bearing a common date of death: July 16, 1990.

The remains of 11 others, like Robbie Garcia—killed is here for pulling two classmates and a teacher from the ruins to safety—are buried elsewhere.

"A total of 24 youths from Bagong Sikat died in the Living College (formerly CCP)," barangay chief Jaime Bolay said.

Why the community suffered so many deaths among the young is just one disease-that-is-memory.

Many farmers sent their children to the CCP because tuition was low and could be paid after harvest. The school was a ton to fetch the students to the village and bring them home after classes, Bolay said.

"Every load, tomorrow was buried then," said farmer Santos, who survived the earthquake.

Ordeal retold

The ordeal to free the head boss to the building, said Santos, who was 15 and in second year high school when the earthquake struck.

"We were on the third floor. We were on our way when the earthquake happened. A few minutes later we were being shaken again. One such rocker said, 'Set dito sa puno noon.' We did. In the second time I felt the shake, our teacher can not without telling us where to do," he said.

"My classmates dashed out to the stairs. My cousin, Rosalie, scrambled back because the burger her mother bought was a good thing we and my other cousin, Michael, turned back because if we joined the rest of our classmates, we would have instantly died like many of them who crashed with the stairs and were buried in the debris," Santos, 33, said.

The CCP's third floor fell. "20 was so ill we were [stuck] in a deep well," she said.

Santos and her eight classmates stayed closed nine hours underneath, able to cry at first but had to lie down as the debris sank by the hour, prevented only by the blackboards on top of them.

Rescue work

While the sound of blood dripping from the neck of a dead classmate scratched, she stayed alive by reciting the rosary. When rescuers reached them at around 9 p.m., through their shouts, Santos had to coax a classmate to tell them that about 50 students were trapped there.

"I had to do that so they would help us first," she said.

At past 1 a.m., the rescuers broke holes on the fallen pools. Like the rest, Santos crawled on top of bodies. Following a crooked path littered with stone.

Her father, Benegildo Pangapisan, cried as he told of the pain of searching for his daughter.

For Ms. Rhanel Gamores, the source of destruction at the CCP were "indescribable" and for a number of survivors "deep."

A psychologist, Gamores said his team counseled 913 survivors for six months, helping them transfer to nearby schools so they could recover quickly.

Pits of fear

"Those who survived had fits of fear. They always cry out to the cross. They can see of the classmates when a passing truck creates rumbling noise," Gamores said.

Santos had to fight guilt as relatives accused her of not saving her other cousin who died during the quake.

"I said, 'How could I save them when I myself was buried there?'" she said.

She said some of her classmates stopped schooling, fearing the will to go on.

"I never surrendered to fear," said Santos, a concurrent graduate who left a job in Manila to care for her two sons.

'Those who survived had fits of fear'

SCENES of destruction in Bagong Sikat after the July 16, 1990 earthquake: Hyun Terrazas Hotel (top) and Bagong Sikat Village Hotel (left). VILLAMOR NOTO

Republic of the Philippines
Region III
PROVINCE OF LANAO DEL NORTE
Gov. Imelda R. Quibranza Government Center
Tipanoan, Tabas, Lipa Township
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Lanao del Norte is hereby inviting bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of "Goods made to order" in accordance for various Managers of the Province

Approved Budget for the Contract: P 3,150,000.00

PARTICULARS	DATE
Deadline for submission of Letter of Intent and issuance of eligibility requirements upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00	July 16-17, 2009
Deadline for Submission of Eligibility requirements	July 20, 2009
Issuance of Bidding Documents to Eligible Bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00	July 21-24, 2009
Pre-Bid Conference	July 24, 2009
Submission and Opening of Bids	August 07, 2009

For any inquiry, please call BAC Secretariat Telephone No. 063-341-4647

The Provincial Government of Lanao del Norte reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and waive any formality or technicality and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the Provincial Government of Lanao Del Norte. The Provincial Government of Lanao Del Norte further reserves the right to disqualify any bidder who has been found to have committed any violation of the Code of Conduct for Bids and Awards of the Provincial Government of Lanao Del Norte guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. ANGELO J. MAGNO**
BAC - Chairperson

(Pub.: July 15, 2009)

Dagupan, Baguio just want to forget

AT 3:26 PM, TOMORrow, Dagupan will pause for a moment. Sirens will blare to remind residents to pause, pray and recall the moment when the city in Pangasinan was shaken by the 7.8-magnitude earthquake in 1990.

The city government will mull those frightening 60 seconds 19 years ago when the earthquake left in fury—it growled, cracked and opened our muddy water. When the quake stopped, buildings and bridges had collapsed, electrical poles were toppled and roads were damaged.

Upon learning, city officials in offices would leave quiet remembering of that moment when the city was humbled by the fury of nature's wrath.

Now, there is a hardly a trace of the devastation. The roads are wider and better paved, the bridges reconstructed, the buildings set-up, and more and bigger business establishments have appeared.

Gonzalo Duque, president of the Lyceum Northwestern University, said that while the earthquake brought the city to its knees, "it did not sink as others predicted."

Former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. was able to prod Pangasinan to rise from the disaster, to rehabilitate the city.

Reviving Dagupan

"We thank God for the spirit of Dagupeños and support of many in reviving Dagupan back to its robust economic activity and prominence. But we look forward to exercise preparing, as well as mitigating, consequences of similar disasters that may confront the city," Mayor Alipio Fernandez Jr. said.

Bajao provided some of the most vivid images of the earthquake, with the local pages of newspapers featuring photographs of Hotel Terrazas Bagulo toppled like a pack of cards.

But the city just wanted to forget. Last year, it staged its last remembrance projects and the only events that attended solemn of the tragedy that reshaped the city were a photo exhibit and video documentation campaign.

Benedicto Alejandro, city tourism officer said the local government wanted to move on by shelving the lessons learned of fortifying for the next city brought about by the tragedy.

Rolando Arnold and Vincent Calvente

BAGUIO City residents keep a positive outlook despite the devastation caused by the earthquake. VILLAMOR NOTO

E-mail: ... Website: ...
Across the NATION
Editor: ... Assistant Editor: Tony Bengcoy

Accusers of cop exec fear for lives

DIGOS CITY—SIX WOMEN who accused the former police chief of Davao del Sur of sexual abuse say they now fear for their lives as their alleged tormentor continues to roam the province after his relief from the post.

One of the alleged victims, a police officer herself, said the bizarre that Senior Supt. Cirilo Dumendiano still comes to Davao del Sur despite having been reassigned as the Southern Mindanao police officer.

Dumendiano, a native of Leyte, was relieved two weeks ago before his alleged victims came out in the open. He was replaced by Senior Supt. Ronald dela Rosa, who was then assigned to Compostela Valley.

Dumendiano's relief, however, was not linked to the alleged abuses and was part of the reshuffling of police directors in southern Mindanao, according to Chief Supt. Dolor Taaga, the regional police chief.

"The last time he was seen in the province was over the weekend," the police officer-in-law said.

No PNP support

"We have been told that he is still around, now our friends' bosses and he is very visible in the city," another alleged victim said.

Another police officer, who was also allegedly molested by Dumendiano, said the lack of support from the regional police leadership for the victims was one of the reasons they came out for their safety.

"He was not being restricted in going around and still has influence over his former members," the police officer said.

Dumendiano, according to another female police officer who also said him his sexual abuse, has even tried to convince them into settling the case in exchange for money.

"He's pay-off could compensate for what he had done to us," she said.

If there was consolation for Dumendiano's alleged victims, it was the help they have been getting from the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) and Gabriela.

They said VACC chair Jacob Jimenez and Gabriela Rep. Luz Ilagan vowed to help them in his case.

Quest for justice

Another alleged victim, the wife of a police officer, said she was pursuing the fight and would not be swayed by Dumendiano's antics.

"He raped me, so he should pay for it," she said.

Dumendiano has repeatedly denied cheating the women. He charged self-Sen. Ruffner Lorenzo, saying he had already consulted a lawyer to study the complaints.

The six complainants said the alleged sexual assault took place at the office of the provincial police chief.

The victims, they said, ranged from sexual advances to outright attacks. Orlando B. Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao

FAITH
The MV Filipinas Oceania, a roll-on-roll-off (Roro) vessel that was acquired in Japan, is docked at Pier 1 as the Cebu port ready to sail for Cebu, Oriental and Bigan. It becomes the eighth ship in a fleet owned by the Concepcion family and, officials said, is a sign of faith in the Philippine economy despite the hardship it is getting from a global recession.

Rapid flu spread brings E. Visayas cases past 100

TACLOBAN CITY—THE NUMBER of confirmed A(H1N1) cases in Eastern Visayas has breached the 100 mark, health officials said yesterday.

In a press conference, Dr. Edgardo Gonzaga, health regional director, said the region (now has) 103 A(H1N1) cases.

More confirmed cases are expected to be reported as results of tests made on suspected patients have not come in yet, he said.

Gonzaga said that while the number was alarming, it also meant that health officials had been effective in tracking down the flu cases.

"The increase of cases shows how effective our surveillance, monitoring, collaboration systems are," he said.

Dr. Jaime Opinion, city health officer, said that 16 people tested positive for A(H1N1) in Tacloban, most of them students.

Gonzaga said there was now a "low-level" transmission of the virus in the city.

He said 96 percent of those infected in the region were students from the elementary to college levels.

The region has at least 10 schools with confirmed flu cases.

At the Leyte National High School, the biggest secondary school in the region with a student population of 6,647, 37 students were suspected to be infected.

They were asked to put themselves under self-quarantine, while the school suspended classes.

A daughter of Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez was earlier confirmed to have been infected with the virus.

Elsewhere, classes were suspended from Tuesday until Friday on the Biliran campus of the Philippine Science High School in Cesa, Carmelino Isle, after 79 of its 300 students showed flu symptoms.

Elsa Ibero, campus director, said the school suspended classes upon the advice of Department of Health officials on an inspection visit.

"The situation is under control, we just have to follow a standard operating procedure of the DOH," she said.

At the Naga Parochial School in Naga City, several pupils were sent home after they showed symptoms of flu.

In Lucena City, six students from a local school were found to have the virus, according to Dr. Wilfredo Francisco, city health officer.

Health officials said the first confirmed case was that of a student in Pagbilao who got the virus from a sibling who came home from Manila to avoid being infected there.

Francisco said two of the students had been confined at a local hospital while the four others are now home for self-quarantine. Joey A. Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas and Aaron Calebio Bolivo and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

DFA opens consular office for Cordillera region

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEPARTment of Foreign Affairs on Monday opened its consular office in the Cordillera Administrative Region, 23 years after the political unit was created.

Assistant Foreign Secretary Henedino Lacsamana said the DFA opened the consulate at the Mansaylao Building on Legarda Road here due to growing demand from migrant workers based in the region.

The consular office would also immediately establish a consular office in the region because of budget constraints and was only able to open its Baguio office this year as the pending of Cordillera representatives.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan promised to introduce a budget for the new office in the next General Appropriations Act (GAA), Lacsamana said.

The high number of residents in the city also became a crucial factor for DFA's service priorities, he said. "There are many students who graduate here, and who seek employment abroad," said Lacsamana.

The consulate will be fully staffed and will handle all DFA services, including the issuance of passports and providing legal services to migrant workers and their relatives, he said.

Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Ombudsman sues Cotabato town mayor for 2007 sex harassment

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSman yesterday charged a town mayor with sexual harassment based on a complaint filed by his administrative aide over sexual pressures committed two years ago.

It was the second sexual harassment case filed against Mayor Rosario Concepcion of Matanog town in North Cotabato.

The first was over a complaint from a provincial employee of the town's Department of Social Welfare and Development office, who accused the mayor of sending her lewd text messages two years ago.

The second case alleged that Concepcion started harassing the complainant on his second day of work on July 17, 2007, by touching her buttocks. Six days later, the mayor allegedly sprayed his perfume on the complainant so that, the mayor allegedly said, "they will have the same smell."

The aide said that on July 31, 2007, Concepcion asked her if she had been kissed.

When she said no, the mayor allegedly said: "I will be the one to kiss you."

She said the mayor touched her head and pinched her left arm on separate occasions. Every time she passed, the mayor sneezed and said, "Bless you."

Concepcion also allegedly texted her his cheater at the office and to go out on a trip to Davao City. The aide said she refused both.

"Those are unintended and unwelcome verbal and physical acts or behavior of a sexual nature and is prejudicial to stability or award a subordinate's employee," said the Ombudsman.

Concepcion denied the allegations and said he never touched his aide's buttocks or sprayed perfume on her.

He also pointed to a barangay chair in Datu who called his aide if she had been kissed. He said he "was not intimate with the complainant."

He admitted touching his aide's head but denied pinching her arm.

His invitation for dinner was an "ordinary gesture," he said.

The mayor's spokesman said the aide was more believable.

"Hindsa'ng fabricated evidences or record dun namin make it believe that complainant was prompted by some malicious motives in filing this case," the Ombudsman said.

BI reports P1B in income amid recession, flu

By Jhonson Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE BUREAU OF Immigration (BI) generated P1 billion in collections for the first half, surpassing its target despite a drop in traveler arrivals brought by the global recession and the A(H1N1) virus.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan, who held a command conference with BI area directors in Cebu on Friday, said the take was 11 percent higher than the bureau's target income of P936 million and up by P17 million than revenue recorded in the first six months of 2008.

Libanan said the bureau registered increased overseas clearance a months drop in foreign arrivals amid a ban yet to increase immigration fees.

Arrivals in the first semester dipped to 1.22 million, lower than 1.3 million in the same period last year.

Cagayan Mabuhay III, a government-owned offshore mining firm remitted P1 million, up from the P700,000 it generated when the bureau was using a manual system.

Davao Sur gov in 'paradox state' over pesticides

DIGOS CITY—DAVAO DEL SUR Gov. Douglas Cagas frowns on sunlight ban on pesticides in his province but could not write off the big plantations yet.

"Banned if you do, banned if you don't," Cagas said in a forum at the Cor Jesu College here, where University of the Philippines researcher Alan Alcantara presented his findings of chemical traces in the blood of people living near banana plantations in Compostela village in Hagonoy town.

"I'm in a state of paradox because I don't only want a ban on aerial spraying in this province but a ban on the use of pesticides," Cagas said. "It's foolhardy for us to deny that pesticides destroy the body."

But he said the social cost of an outright ban might be far much worse.

Davao del Sur, which has been promoting itself as a top quality mango exporter and producer of a high yielding rice variety, still count on big plantations to employ a large number of workers.

"Hagonoy people are afraid because of fear of losing their livelihood," Cagas said.

"What shall we do? We know, deep in our hearts, that it's bad for our health and it's affecting the environment," he said. "But we can't write off the big plantations yet. The banana plantations are very powerful," he said.

Libanan, whose study on cancer clustered by the Department of Health (DOH), confirmed traces of pesticide residues in the blood samples of Compostela residents living near the banana plantations.

He also confirmed the presence of ethylenebisdithiocarbamate (EBDT) in the soil and air samples.

EBDT is a metabolite of fungicides believed to cause cancer. After a fungicide is sprayed, it breaks down into ETU and stays in the environment.

Libanan's study boosted the environment groups' campaign to ban aerial spray in the province.

Cagas and Hagonoy, where the study was made, boasted of the highest yield in the 11 municipalities in Davao del Sur despite the ban on aerial spray, much of which still depended on chemicals. "The study is a cause for concern," Cagas said.

He said the local government has been empowered under the Local Government Code to protect both the environment and the health of its people.

But in Davao City, big banana companies questioned a 2007 resolution adopted by the city council banning aerial spraying. The Court of Appeals decided in favor of the banana growers, prompting environmentalist groups to bring the case to the Supreme Court.

Carmelino Lucero, Inquirer Mindanao

Swine flu pandemic now unstoppable–WHO

From page A1

decide on their national priorities, but other groups should include pregnant women and anyone over six months old who has chronic health problems, the WHO official said.

Children as amplifiers

Particular attention would have to be paid to children since they are considered "amplifiers" of the spread of the virus, especially when gathered in schools, Kieny added.

Six public high schools, six public elementary schools and six private schools in the Philippines remain closed until July 28 for having confirmed cases of the flu, the Department of Education (DepEd) said yesterday.

Some 107 students at San Pablo National High School in San Pablo, Laguna, are under observation after five students tested positive for the swine flu virus, the DepEd said.

More than 90,000 swine flu cases have been reported worldwide, including 429 deaths, the most recent WHO numbers from last week show.

Most of the deaths reported on Monday were in Asia, with Thailand reporting three fatalities and the Philippines two. Thailand's death toll has now reached 21, while the Philippines has three deaths.

Elderly's extra immunity

Several reports showed the new virus attacks people differently than seasonal flu—affecting younger people, the severely obese and seemingly healthy adults, and causing disease deep in the lungs.

The elderly seem to have some extra immunity to this new H1N1, which is a mixture of two swine viruses, one of which also contains genetic material from birds and humans. It is a very distant cousin of the H1N1 virus that caused the 1918 pandemic that killed 50 million to 100 million people.

A study published in the journal Science on Monday confirmed that the blood of people born before 1920 carries antibodies to the 1918 strain, suggesting their immune systems remember a childhood infection.

Obesity risk factor

The work by Dr. Yoshihiro Kawaoka also supports other studies that this new H1N1 strain does not stay in the nose and throat, as do most seasonal viruses.

"The H1N1 virus replicates more efficiently below the lungs," Kawaoka said. Other studies have also shown it can cause gastrointestinal effects, and that it targets people not usually thought of as being at high risk.

"Obesity has been observed in he case of the risk factors for more severe reaction to H1N1"—something never before seen, Kieny added. It is not clear if obese people may have undiagnosed health problems that make them vulnerable, or if obesity in and of itself is a risk.

211 deaths in the US

On Friday, a team at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the University of Michigan reported that nine out of 10 patients treated in an Australian care unit have come down.

They also had several symptoms such as blood clots in the lungs and multiple organ failure. None have received and three died.

The CDC estimates at least a million people are believed in the United States alone and clinics everywhere are advised not to test each and every patient, so keeping an accurate count will be impossible. The United States has documented 211 deaths.

More damage to lungs

While most cases have been considered mild, a study released on Monday said the virus causes more lung damage than ordinary seasonal flu strains but still responds to antiviral drugs.

Virologists tested samples of the virus taken from patients in the United States as well as several seasonal flu viruses on mice, ferrets, macaque monkeys and specially bred minihuman pigs.

They found that A(H1N1) caused more severe lung lesions among mice, ferrets and macaques than the seasonal flu viruses.

But it did not cause any symptoms among the mini-pigs, which could explain why there has been no evidence that pigs in Mexico fell sick with the disease before the outbreak began among humans.

First line of defense

The team also found that the virus was highly sensitive to two approved anti-viral drugs, oseltamivir and zanamivir, now being hurriedly stockpiled around the world.

This confirms the drugs' role as a "first line of defense" against the flu pandemic, the team said.

The worry about the present strain of A(H1N1) is that it could pick up genes from other flu strains that would enable it to be both highly virulent and contagious, said the new study.

Another concern is that the virus could acquire resistance enabling it to be resistant to Tamiflu.

Australians to be immunized

In Australia, authorities scrambled Tuesday to immunize its entire population against swine flu if necessary.

Australia, where the swine flu strain has infected almost 10,000 people and been linked to 19 deaths, said it was placing an advance order for 21 million courses of a vaccine that is now under development.

South Korea has reported no deaths but is also ordering vaccines, in its case enough for 13 million people—more than a quarter of the population.

2M high-risk people

Densely populated Hong Kong, which was paralyzed by an outbreak of severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in 2003, said this week it was buying enough swine flu vaccine to cover two million high-risk people.

Daniel Arenas, Rossella Bacco, Schering-Plough's Nelson, Gioacchino Milite, Solvay, CSL and AstraZeneca's McClements are among those working on flu vaccines. Reports from Reuters, AFP and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

TESTING A student's temperature (at left) is checked with an infrared thermometer for the swine flu virus before entering the Far Eastern University campus in Manila on Tuesday and at the University of Baguio City (above). The number of A(H1N1)-related fatalities has risen to three and there are now 2,644 confirmed cases in the country.

100 congressmen jostling for US trip

From page A1

Some of them had earlier signed up for Ms Arroyo's trip to Egypt but later canceled their bookings—apparently preferring the White House over the pyramids. The President left for Egypt yesterday (See story on Page A2.)

A source at the House of Rep. asked, on condition that his name not be mentioned, yesterday that the House leadership "is trying to limit the number of lawmakers who will be going to Napa in May—while Congress was in session...to match the championship fight between Filipino boxing star Manny Pacquiao and Britain's Ricky Hatton."

The President is again leaving for the US capital shortly after delivering her last State of the Nation Address (SONA) before Congress on July 27.

Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez yesterday said he was still weighing whether to join the trip considering that Congress has just resumed session by then after a two-month break.

"I still have a lot of paperwork to finish. I might not join the trip," Suarez said.

Antipolo Rep. Jose Maglaslang warned fellow House members joining the US trip against spending public funds for luxuries.

"They've had too many foreign trips and already spent millions in taxpayer money. It's a shame that they are jetsetting at the expense of their poor constituency," Maglaslang said in a statement.

51 presidential trips

Lawmakers on official business trips abroad receive funding for their travel and hotel accommodations, plus allowances from the House's P5-billion budget.

Ms Arroyo has taken 51 foreign trips since assuming office in 2001, all costing an estimated P3 billion.

Meanwhile, a source assured that Obama's decision to meet with Ms Arroyo means that her allies' perceived efforts to keep her in power through Charter change (Cha-cha) are over and that the country will have elections next year.

"This is because I don't see the Speaker of the US government, which frowns on cheating and democracy across the world, agreeing to meet with a President if they have not cleared up the issue that there will be no more Cha-Cha or any attempt to subvert our Constitution," the Malacañang source said.

So, this is a good sign," said Roxas, considered among the front-runners in the 2010 presidential race. "[It's a sign that the elections will proceed and Cha-cha is no more."

Way of drug lobby

Senate also urged President Arroyo not to give in should Obama lobby on behalf of pharmaceutical firms that would be affected by the country's cheaper medicines law.

"The pharmaceutical industry is one of the most powerful and wealthy lobbies in the US," Roxas said. "If this is brought up during the meeting, we should not succumb at the altar of good US-RP relations, the altar of photo-ops, the headdance of our counterpart."

Roxas warned that the drug firms' lobby might be raised at the White House meeting as a "quid pro quo."

"A meeting between Presidents usually tackles a lot of issues like security, financial integration, trade, movement of persons across regions, agricultural help ... but this [issue of cheaper medicines] could also be brought up," he noted. *With a report from Philip C. Tubeza*

Asean test: New 'boat people' from Burma

From page A1

minority in Burma's Rakhine State and a people without a country, a powerful right's chamber is a distant dream.

"Even if you are not doing anything, anyone might report you. Every time you have a dog barking, you don't know whether the Army is coming to arrest you," said Chris Lewa, head of the humanitarian group Arakan Project, which is fighting for the rights of thousands of Rohingya refugees who have fled Burma and found new homes in Bangladesh.

The fate of the Rohingya has become a cast for the reputation of Southeast Asian bloc Asean. Will the 10-member bloc, which includes the Philippines, be true to its pledge to be "a caring and sharing community?"

Escape from Burma

That's one question Emjee Ullah, a 35-year-old refugee now living in the Thai town of Mae Sot, is asking.

Emjee escaped from Burma with his wife and their child in 1999 after an incident during the wedding of a friend which showed them that normal life was nearly impossible for the Rohingya in the military-ruled country.

Soldiers had barged into the wedding and grabbed the groom for his supposed political activities. Emjee tried to intervene, but ended up being a target of arrest himself. He hid and the soldiers beat his wife.

"In our place, if any government officers take action against the Rohingya, it's no big thing," Rangoon said in a recent interview.

It isn't hard to understand why thousands of Rohingya have been making their lives in free Burma abroad. Said, overloaded wooden boats, Emjee said.

New 'boat people'

What is difficult for him to understand is why the world seems to ignore their plight.

Their escape from political persecution brings to mind the migration of more than two million Vietnamese in the 1970s after South Vietnam fell to communist hands.

In January, Thailand's military was accused of having hundreds of Rohingya back to the sea with little food and water on their engineless boats. Some drifted to nearby countries.

The matter is now before the Asean.

Human rights body

In December last year, the Asean charter came into force embodying principles that call for the establishment of a human rights body.

Nongovernment groups have urged Asean to use its new mandate to act decisively to help persecuted peoples. Whether Asean, with its policy of noninterference in a member state's affairs, will act at the risk of antagonizing member Burma, remains to be seen.

The Rohingya Muslims are a minority in the largely Buddhist country. Their dusky skin and other physical features make them look different from the rest of the population. They speak a Bengali dialect.

A 1982 law stripped them of citizenship, making them stateless. They are shunned by most Burmese, who view them as outsiders. Burma's survey in Hong Kong was quoted by news reports as describing them as "ugly as ogres."

No travel, no jobs

They need hard-to-get permission to travel outside their village, depriving them of the chance to study or seek treatment in better-equipped schools and hospitals, Lewa said.

They also need permission to marry and are restricted in as more than two children. They are shut out from government jobs. Their lands are taken from them and they are subjected to forced labor, Lewa added.

She said the abuses had fueled the Rohingya exodus. Initially, they crossed the border to Bangladesh or went to the Middle East.

But recent travel restrictions have given them no other choice but to escape by sea on hazardous trips arranged by human smugglers. They usually flee to Malaysia but they have also turned up in Indonesia and Thailand.

No room for them

Indonesia said it would deport them, but later allowed the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to rarely their status as refugees.

Thailand has convicted 66 Rohingya of illegal entry, saying they were economic migrants only looking for jobs.

Deporting them poses problems: Burma denies they are its citizens and refuses to accept them. Later, it said it would take them back but only if they said they were Bengalis. Bangladesh says they are not its nationals.

"This is not case for Asean ... whether or not they will uphold their commitment and principles they set forth in the Charter," said Sriprapha Petcharamesree, director of the Human Rights Studies at Mahidol University in Thailand.

Thailand cited domestic concerns for denying them entry. A deputy prime minister was quoted as saying that accepting 200,000 to 300,000 Rohingya would be a huge burden for Thailand.

Back to the sea, again

Petcharamesree said on state should abandon humanitarian obligations based on its own internal affairs. She said the Asean human rights body should tackle the Rohingya issue, or "it would definitely be discredited."

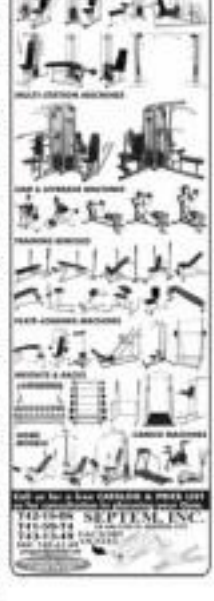
Debbie Stothard of the Alternative Asean network on Burma (Altsean) said the Asean policy of noninterference was a "red herring" invoked to escape state obligations.

However, Asean means, it will be October again soon, the waters will be calmer again, and Rangoon's people will again be leaving the seas.

The sad thing is they'd rather face the dangers from the waves than spend more sleepless nights hearing the dogs howling at the moon again, Emjee said.

"They will be thinking, 'If I stay, I die. If I jump into the sea, it's the same thing. But if I can swim to the shores or any one, tomorrow I can help my family who are suffering.'"

Editor's note: This article was under the 2008 Southeast Asian Press Alliance Fellowship.)



NEWS

Legacy owner too sick to be arrested

A PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE DOCTOR HAS RECOMmended that Cebu de los Angeles, the accused owner of the failed Legacy Group, should be allowed to stay on at the St. Luke's Medical Center after validating his medical condition during a visit yesterday.

Supt. Louie Bautista, the PNP doctor, confirmed St. Luke's diagnosis that De los Angeles—who was ordered arrested last Monday for multiple-count cases involving the alleged financial irregularities in Legacy's card banks and pension funds—is suffering from stage-four cancer of the tonsils and is in need of daily radiation treatment and chemotherapy.

Bautista has recommended that De los Angeles be confined in St. Luke's for at least 20 days, after which his conditions will be reevaluated.

The doctor said De los Angeles, 56, had experienced difficulty breathing and swallowing and had rashes running through his throat and stomach.

"Aside from that, he's stable. He's strong, conscious and can converse by writing," Bautista said.

Reinkennard Supt. Ybell Bersamin, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group's Deterrence and Special Operations Division (CIDG-DSOD), visited De los Angeles yesterday and conferred with his doctor, Benjamin Campomanes.

The CIDG-DSOD placed De los Angeles under arrest at the hospital last Monday based on a warrant issued by a Cagayan de Oro court on July 9 for several cases of syndicated estafa.

Bersamin said the doctors had discussed the possibility of having De los Angeles confined instead in the PNP General Hospital in Camp Crame.

But he said the PNP hospital cannot provide the kind of treatment that St. Luke's is providing as "we don't have those sophisticated equipment."

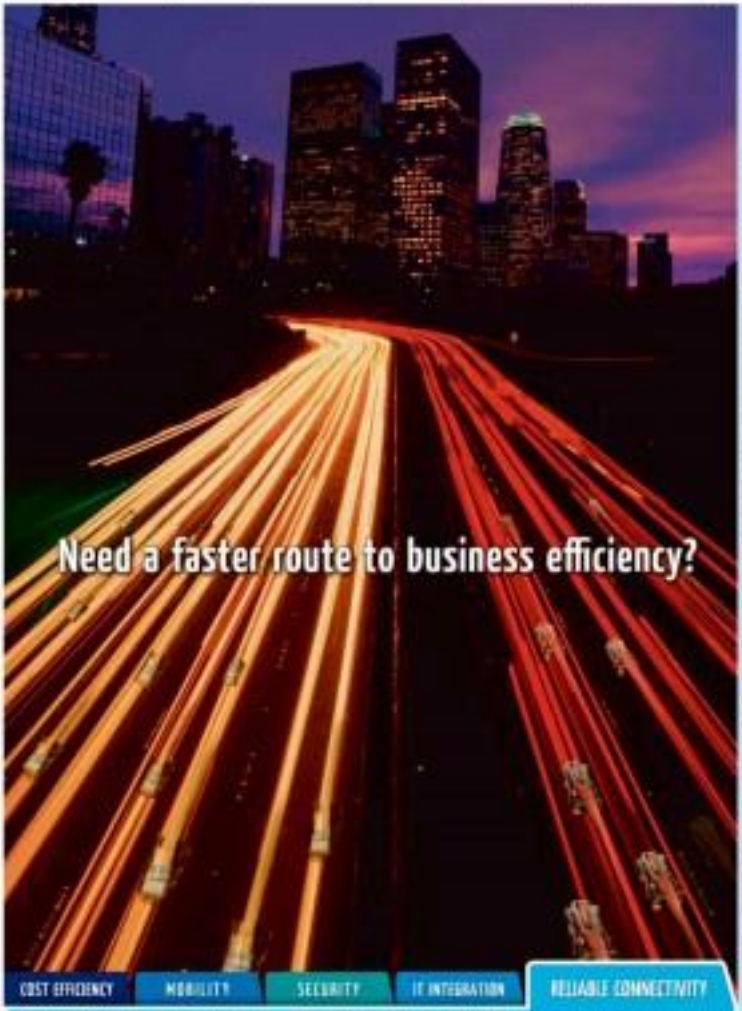
According to Bautista, it would be impractical to hold the accused in Camp Crame and then transport him to St. Luke's every day for treatment.

Bersamin also said that as the accused is monitoring in the hospital was adequate, the 24-hour security detail for De los Angeles would be reduced from three officers to two.

Meanwhile, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in Albay province has ordered the vice mayor of Sto. Domingo to be ready to assume the mayoral post if after four days, De los Angeles, the town's mayor, fails to resume office in a month of his arrest.

"After four days of vacancy of the seat, the sole commander shall take effect," said Ramiro Arvisu, the DILG-Albay local government operations officer.

—Jerry Esplanada with Ayo Al Mord, *Inquirer Southern Luzon*



Globe Business launches the Net Accelerator for a faster and optimized WAN

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He added, "As business customers enjoy the accelerated and optimized network operations, we help mitigate setbacks on money loss, productivity and opportunity losses due to network connectivity issues. It's a solution that brings reliable connectivity, it helps enterprises improve their business processes."

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Llanday

DID YOU KNOW

BEFORE it was named after the famous painter in 1913, Juan Luna Street in Manila had been called Anloague, after the carpenter who used to occupy the area. Anloague was the site of the Sulitanas residence of Noli Me Tangere character Kapitan Tiago.

Cyril L. Bonilla/Jr. Inquirer Research

3 sexy stars cleared of perjury raps

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE QUEZON CITY PROSECUTORS OFFICE has dismissed the perjury charges filed against three sexy stars by a talent manager who accused them of lying in a complaint they filed against her with the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) last year.

In a three-page resolution dated May 29 which was released only yesterday, Assistant City Prosecutor Wilfredo Andres junked the case filed by Rose Pascualucco against Ara Mina (Hazel Reyes in real life), Mara Taylor (Maureen Ann Bulosan) and Aubrey Miles (Aubrey Sandoval).

According to Andres, it was [cont'd. on]

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Antistreet parking fee groups told: Speak up

Councilor wants guards posted at billboards

By Julie M. Aurelio

IF A QUEZON CITY COUNcilor had his way, security guards would watch over billboards in the city so distraught motorists, jobless or people with suicidal tendencies from climbing them.

In a proposed ordinance, Councilor Eduel Lagman Jr. also urged billboard operators to limit the height of ladders installed beside the structures to only 1.2 feet to prevent people from mounting them all the way to the top.

"It can be surmised that many billboard structures have become an accessible and perennial site where suicides may be committed as the same have befallen like structures which are unsecured and unregulated," Lagman said.

Under proposed Ordinance 2009-76, the city's business permits and licensing office and the engineers' office will make sure that billboard owners comply with the regulations before they are issued a permit.

Violators will pay a fine of P5,000 or face imprisonment of one year.

Per billboard operators who cannot post a security guard, they will be asked to put a lock on the ladder installed near the structure.

Julie M. Aurelio

SENSOR hop. Jessilou Binayog checks the new gun used by the two robbers.

It did not pay to rob the same store again

By Tina G. Santos

TWO MEN WHO TRIED TO ROB the same store a second time were killed in a shootout with policemen early morning yesterday in Tondo, Manila.

Dennis Dimacela, 27, a resident of Bataan Compound, Tondo, and his alleged cohort who has yet to be identified, died while undergoing treatment at the Gat Andres Bonifacio Hospital. Both sustained multiple gunshot wounds.

Behind from them were a .38 cal. pistol and a cal. .22 revolver.

Investigators of the Manila Police District's homicide division said the shootout took place in front of a store on C.M. Recto Avenue at around 3:20 a.m.

Investigators showed that the two men, who were armed with handguns, went inside the store and posed as customers before announcing the heist.

Unknown to them, several policemen in civilian clothes were in the area because the store's owner, Jose Ching, had asked for help because the store had already been robbed by the same men the day before.

When the police introduced themselves, the two men fired at them, leading to a shootout.

Police said that during the first robbery which was caught on the establishment's closed circuit television camera, the two men took several cell phones and P5,000 in cash.

3 traffic enforcers ordered dismissed over ₱20 bribe

By Nikko Catherine Calleja

METROPOLITAN MANILA DEvelopment Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando has ordered the dismissal of three of the agency's traffic enforcers for accepting bribes from bus drivers.

Ricky Cerog, Gerard Molina, and Philip Roberto—members of the MMDA Edsa Traffic Enforcement Unit—were earlier arrested after they were caught in a camera accepting P20 from the driver of each bus passing through the Edsa-Shaw Boulevard intersection in Mandaluyong City.

The P20 was in exchange for letting the bus drivers stay a while longer on the service road to pick up passengers.

Earlier, MMDA General Manager Robert Bautista and Traffic Operations Center (TOC) Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios ordered members of the agency's newly formed Task Force Harbor Team to conduct surveillance operations in the area from June 23 to 25 after receiving numerous complaints.

The team is composed of representatives from the TOC's Intelligence and Investigations Unit, Traffic Enforcement Group, Road Clearing Group and the Office of the General Manager.

"MMDA will never tolerate illegal activities that only serve to taint the good image the agency has painstakingly earned," Fernando said.

3 sexy stars . . .

From page A-19

too early to make a ruling on Fluminiano's complaint because the ILHRB has not yet decided on the case filed by the actress-singer last year.

"It is her prerogative to ask first for the ILHRB to make a ruling, because . . . the issues raised are not necessarily related and intertwined with the present case," he said in his resolution.

Fluminiano had charged the director with nullity of property after they filed a complaint against her with the ILHRB in October 2008.

In their complaint, Miss Taylor and Miles asked the ILHRB to nullify their lease with the Home Mutual Development Fund (HMDF) and to order Fluminiano and her husband, Edgardo, to turn over the house to which they supposedly promised the actresses.

According to the three women, the Fluminianos used their names without their knowledge to borrow P6 million from the HMDF.

They told the bureau that they only found out that they had commanding loans with the government agency when they received a collection notice in August.

Based on the collection notice they received, the three said they owed the agency P1.8 million each.

In their complaint, the actresses told Rose Fluminiano had provided them no help because of the Financial Executive Office in Taytay City which she used her husband owned.

To pay for their houses, the couple asked them to promote the housing project through testimonial and paid them. However, the said the actresses never received the payments.

Illanda said the actresses were aimed at clearing the city's streets of obstructions that could endanger pedestrians and motorists.

"In this point, we are still only exploring possibilities," he added.

OFF the beds (from left): Ara Mina, Aubrey Miles, Maui Taylor

Online drive for change nets more members, ₱1.1-M funds

By Nikko Catherine Calleja

DESPITE NEGATIVE FEEDBACKS and the proliferation of fake dog tags, the online drive "Ako Mismo" has reached a number of 250,000 "committed members" and raised P1.1 million in funds in just two months.

The movement has been drawing and getting younger, Sunn Dimacali, group president and CEO of DDB Philippines, told the business.

Dimacali with other DDB officials recently led the turnover of the P1.1 million worth of checks to 11 partners and beneficiaries of Ako Mismo.

DDB Philippines, a group of companies engaged in business communications, including Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Smart Foundation, started Ako Mismo with a TV advertisement starring actress Angel Locsin, host Luis Manzano, singer Ely Buendia, and other known personalities.

Indicators of change

"While the goals are general, the movement can still achieve indicators for societal change," Dimacali said.

She noted that Ako Mismo members, who registered online, are usually "youth, between 18 to 25 years old, wanting to initiate change by doing something on their own."

But with the 2010 elections barely months away, the Ako Mismo officials said they would distance themselves from "politics" and refrain from endorsing candidates.

'Are you for sale'

Dimacali said a member had to confront at least one politician who asked, "Are you for sale?" But she said the group chose not to dwell on that since no bill scrap was made.

Members and organizers just tell politicians that they may register to be members of Ako Mismo, but they may not use the group's platforms for campaigning, Dimacali explained.

"But we want to encourage young people to register and vote," she said describing the campaign as indirect—and not to jaded—advocacy for clean and free elections.

Criticisms

Days after the launch of Ako Mismo on May 3, groups like YouthVotePhilippines aired their criticisms about the movement.

Janine Garchitorena, a member of YouthVotePhilippines said previously that the website of Ako Mismo appeared to be a "phishing site" aiming to gather personal information through the Internet for clandestine and illegal purposes.

The group also alleged that the movement was being used for the rumored electoral campaign of PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan.

But Ako Mismo members repeatedly denied all the speculations saying the movement is a "citizen effort" to initiate change.

Dimacali said that through the P1.1 million proceeds to organizations, they were bringing the movement to another step higher.

The beneficiaries are Caritas Manila, Educational Research and Development Assistance, PLDT and Smart Foundation, DDB Cares, Sunday Take Action, United Nations Standup Against Poverty, Gerard Kalaw, World Vision, Cora Lacuesta, PHP Bridge of Hearts Foundation, and Dynamic Teen Company.

Dolores Cambelar, Enfo's executive director, said the donation to their group is equivalent to three affordable, price-level classes in depressed communities for a semester.

Meanwhile, the P100,000 would translate to net loans and let for toward Kalinga, or 10 new sponsored kids for World Vision, Dimacali said.

Warnings

Another hurdle for Ako Mismo, Dimacali said, was the proliferation of the counterfeit Ako Mismo dog tags.

"The mere buying of fake dog tags and other merchandise is against the principles of the Ako Mismo because it deprives the charities and nonprofit organizations beneficiary from the sale of genuine dog tags," she said.

Through the initiations of the Mismo movement, we hope to bring genuine awareness as a higher price, the movement chose not to run after those behind the piracy.

"We won't do any legal action or get them. What are we to do, that?" she said. "What we did now to pose a disclaimer to the internet at www.akomismo.org warning the public about the fakes."

Members were also asked to call the attention of people they caught buying the fake dog tags.

ABS Mismo officials recently turned over P1.1 million in donated funds to beneficiaries.

METROBRIEFS

Halili, Kho attend closed-door hearings

ACTRESS Katrina Halili and Ex. Hayden Kho Jr. separately attended closed-door clarification hearings conducted by prosecutors at the Department of Justice yesterday. The hearings were part of the preliminary investigation into the violence against woman and children charge filed by Halili against Kho. Yesterday, both parties were asked to clarify earlier statements in their affidavits. They were also asked to respond to issues raised by the other party against them. Halili faced the panel first followed by Kho. Another clarification hearing will be held on July 21. *Norman Bordadora*

Man shot dead in front of his family

AN UNEMPLOYED man was shot dead by two armed men in front of his family in Las Piñas City on Monday night, police said. Antonio Gaviola, 38, was watching television in the living room with his family when the killers barged into their house and shot him several times. He was dead while being treated at the Philippine General Hospital, according to a report of Las Piñas City police investigators. SPO2 Rolando Baquiran and PO3 Erlando Bautista Jr. *Nina Catherine Calleja*

2009 Consular Directory off the press

THE 944-page Manila-based Diplomatic and Consular Directory has been released with photos of foreign ambassadors and foreign affairs officials in the country. The only printed directory of its kind in the country, glossy book paper copies are now available in bookstores, hotels, or at 334 Cruz St., Makiki, Pasay (02)8828-9 or diplomaticpost@yahoo.com. The directory was published by Ambassador D. V. Caparas.

China widens spy probe of steel industry players

BEIJING—JOSHUA HUA AND Steel Group Corp. (Sasteel) is among five major Chinese steel makers reported to be embroiled in the espionage scandal linked to Anglo-Australian miner Rio Tinto, the latest episode in a widening investigation into alleged bribery and secrets.

"Executives from Sasteel are being investigated [in the Rio Tinto-related case]", a senior manager at a domestic steel maker told China Daily on Monday, requesting anonymity.

Apart from managers at the Liaoning-based steel mill, executives from China's largest steel maker Baosteel Group Corp., as well as Laigang Group and Jigang Group, are under investigation, domestic media reported.

Officials from China Iron and Steel Association (CISA), the industry body, are also being investigated, they reported.

Yan Hulin, a senior executive in charge of iron ore imports and exports at China's eighth largest steel mill, Shougang, was arrested on July 7 for alleged commercial crimes.

Yan is said to be close to Australian-born Hu, a Rio Tinto executive who is being detained by China on espionage charges.

Whose connected by China Daily are Monday, Shougang, Laigang, Jigang and the CISA refused to comment. *China Daily/Asia News Network*

CIA plan to hit al-Qaida bared

WASHINGTON—JUNE 2001, the CIA had developed plans to dispatch small teams overseas to kill senior al-Qaida terrorists, according to current and former government officials.

The plans were never carried out, the officials said, and Leon E. Panetta, the CIA director, canceled the program last month.

Officials at the spy agency over the years ran into myriad logistical, legal and diplomatic obstacles. How could the role of the United States be masked? Should allies be informed and might they block the access of the CIA teams to their targets? What if American officers or their foreign surrogates were caught in the midst of an operation? Should such activities violate international law or US restrictions on assassination or murder?

"We year after year, according to officials briefed on the program, the plans were never completely shelved because the Bush administration sought an alternative to killing terror suspects with missiles fired from drone aircraft or seizing them overseas and locking them in secret CIA prisons.

Panetta canceled the program, which would have relied on paramilitary teams, shortly after the CIA's counterterrorism center informed him of its existence. The next day, June 24, he told congressional intelligence committees that the plan had been hidden from lawmakers, initially at the instruction of former Vice President Dick Cheney.

The program was designed in the chaotic months after the Sept. 11 attacks when President Bush signed a secret order authorizing the CIA to capture or kill Qaida operatives around the world.

A CIA spokesperson declined to comment.

Congressional Democrats were furious that the program had not been shared with the committees. The Senate and House oversight committees were created by law in the 1970s in response to disclosures of CIA abuses, including assassination plots against Fidel Castro in Cuba and other foreign politicians. In addition, President Gerald R. Ford in 1976 issued an executive order banning assassinations.

Kenneth Anderson, a law professor at American University who has studied targeted killings, said the US first argued in 1993 that killing terrorists would not violate the assassination ban and would be a legal act of self-defense under international law.

In legal terms, Anderson said, there is no real difference between killing a terrorist with a missile or with a handgun. "In political terms, there's a real difference," he said. "The middle-level men like regular warfare, even if it's carried out by the CIA." *New York Times News Service*

WORLDBRIEFS

Liberia's Taylor says case built on lies

THE HAGUE—Former Liberian President Charles Taylor took the stand in his own defense at his war crimes trial on Tuesday and told judges the case against him was built on lies and sensitive realism. Taylor is charged with 11 counts of murder, torture, rape, sexual slavery, using child soldiers and spreading terror during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war. It is "very, very, very unfortunate that the prosecution—because of disinformation, sensitive realism, lies, rumors—would associate me with such titles or descriptions," Taylor said. *AP*

Fujimori admits irregular payments

LIMA—Former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori acknowledged on Monday that he paid his spy chief $15 million in state money to quit as his government collapsed amid a corruption scandal. Fujimori's defense lawyer, Cesar Nakazaki, said the 70-year-old ex-president should not be held criminally responsible for the irregular payments to spymaster Vladimiro Montesinos because he later repaid the money. "I only accept the facts. I do not accept the criminal responsibility, the punishment or the civil reparations," Fujimori told the court. *AP*

Nazi guard Demjanjuk charged

MUNICH—German prosecutors charged suspected death camp guard John Demjanjuk on Monday with helping to kill nearly 29,000 Jews in World War II, setting the stage for what could be Germany's last big Nazi war crimes trial. "State prosecutors in Munich have today charged the 89-year-old John Demjanjuk as an accessory to murder in a total of 27,900 cases," prosecutors said in a statement. Nazi hunters welcomed the announcement, which follows years of legal arguments over the wartime activities of Klim-born Demjanjuk, who denies any role in the Holocaust. *Reuters*

Japan's ruling party defeats no-confidence vote

TOKYO—Japan's ruling party defeated a no-confidence motion on Tuesday against the prime minister's Cabinet, but an increasingly bold opposition used the occasion to keep criticism on the government it aims to oust in national elections next month. The powerful lower house of parliament, which is controlled by the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner, easily voted down the motion, 333 to 130. *AP*

To: DZRH — HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!

from: PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO & The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office

Health Advisory

Influenza A(H1N1)

- Influenza A(H1N1) is a new virus causing illness and spreading easily from person-to-person, through coughing or sneezing of infected persons.
- The virus has caused mild illness in the majority of the affected patients, most of whom will fully recover in a few days, even without treatment.
- *Even if the disease is mild, we should continue to be vigilant about our health.*
- *Cases can become serious among those with underlying medical conditions.*

How To Know if You Have the Flu

Influenza A(H1N1) has the signs and symptoms similar to regular flu such as:

- Fever
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle or joint pains
- Lack of appetite
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Cough

Some people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

What to Watch Out For

If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, see your doctor immediately.

In children, the emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention are:

- Fast breathing or difficulty in breathing (labored breathing)
- Bluish skin or lips
- Not drinking enough fluids or not feeding well
- Severe or repeated vomiting
- Drowsiness or not interacting as usual
- Irritability or not wanting to be held
- When flu-like symptoms subside but resume accompanied by worse coughing

In adults, the emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty of breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Who are at High Risk

1. Those who have higher risk of serious complications and need to be given extra attention are:
   - children less than 5 years old and elderly person age 65 years and older
   - pregnant women
   - malnourished
2. Persons with chronic medical conditions such as:
   - asthma
   - uncontrolled diabetes
   - cardiovascular disease
   - chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
   - chronic liver or kidney disease
   - recipients of organ transplant
3. Those who are immunocompromised
4. Those suffering from other infections like HIV/AIDS and TB

These high-risk groups should immediately see a doctor, once they have the flu symptoms.

Congratulations to **DZRH** *on its 70th anniversary!*

DZRH ON ITS 70TH YEAR:

GRASSROOTS ENTERTAINMENT & THE PUBLIC PULSE

By Susan Fermeo Arroyo

Turning 70 today is DZRH, flagship station of Manila Broadcasting Company, and considered the standard-bearer of broadcasting excellence in the Philippines. Popularly known by its tagline "Kasama tatahan sa Pilipinas," DZRH first went on the air in 1939 as KZRH, a single-kilowatt Eteeba-based radio station owned by the H.E. Heacock Company.

Known as the Voice of the Philippines during the pre-dawn of World War II, KZRH was the only media willness to the invasion of the US Armed Forces in the Far East by the Japanese Imperial Army when Corregidor fell in April, 1942.

With the Heacocks barely taking over the station's helm after the war, KZRH underwent a rebirth that was to determine its eventual role as the history of Philippine radio. Believing that the medium must respond and reflect the people's needs and desires, it spearheaded innovations in radio programming that produced legends in the field of broadcasting.

Apart from delivering news and information, KZRH featured sports, singing competitions, and soap operas on the air, thoughtfully injected Filipino questions that contain practical solutions.

Before the advent of television with its computer-generated stars and instant replays in slow-mo, sportscasting from Wilfrido Hernandez was already bringing images of hardcourt action to many homes via KZRH, and subsequently, it was through him that legendary basketeers Carlos Loyzaga, Francisco Rebol, and Lim "Boy" Lastimosa became household names.

In 1949, the same year that a Broadcast Commission regulation changed its name to DZRH, the station began airing Lina Flor's radio drama Gabriela ng Dalad, which eventually became the most popular daytime series in radio history, eventually changing the face of radio programming in the country.

By the mid-50's, just as soap operas matchmoved on Philippine radio, DZRH took another step forward by launching a counselling program featuring Dely Magpayo, who became known to the local listening line Lenten dwelling domestic and marital woes unveiled. This Dely's compassionate intuition, and along with it, the commencement of the listening public. Its popular was the radio program that in 1956, DZH Pioneers translated it from the big screen via Mga Liham Kay Dely, a five-day soap after five decades. This Dely's eyewear reminder, a constant on the DZRH programming roster, with generations of fans still posing for her ever-soothing voice, even after her death in September 2000.

DZRH had very popular programs supported by corporate sponsors that drew enthusiastic participation from Filipino homemakers. 90 percent of whom had their ears glued to the radio while they did their daily chores at home. One was called Gulong Sheli, which featured the real-and-reel life tandem of Lolita Rodriguez and Eddie Arenas. The other was Reyna Ng Tiktic, at which a Reyna was chosen daily from among the many who braved being interviewed on the air, and was named queen for the day. The show likewise inspired a movie of the same name, produced by Sampaguita Pictures, which starred the studio's most bankable stars — Gloria Romero, Rita Gomez, Amalia Fuentes, and Susan Roces.

Indeed, DZRH emerged the acknowledged leader during the golden days of radio, also airing comedy shows like Tiang Tiang Tong, adventure shows like Kapitan Bidlar, detective dramas like Johnny Dawas, horror shows like Gabi ng Lagim, and the ever-popular Dr. Fuentes Erlpa.

The station truly has the stuff that legends are made of. A frontrunner in news reporting, it still boasts of veteran radiomen like Teddy Benigno who, during the EDSA years with public affairs programs like Liberty in Action and Rendezvous Beyan, Binasog Ito remains confident that despite the proliferation of telecasters on the air, nothing beats the immediacy of radio. And with his trusty colleague Tolsay" Dee Macaraeg now exactly being 3rd ground rule by his bedmate, DZRH reserves the public its daily dose of historical authority.

DZRH anchors Ruth Abas and Andy Verde, on the other hand, have taken the usual radio commentary to an area where others fear to tread. Their surprisingly popular "Love Chat" lumbers highly sensitive personal problems including physics with accuracy in an objective and non-figmer manner, providing the show with a unique bold through behavioral science and unrelieved advertion.

In 1998, under the stewardship of MBC Chairman Fred J. Elizalde, DZRH embarked on a Voice Station, One Station" initiative, expanding its coverage to an unprecedented 97% of the Philippine archipelago. To date, it is the only station in the country that is on the air nationwide 24 hours a day on stereo-quality simulcast via satellite to relay stations in key provincial cities.

News manager Andy Vital has likewise firmly taken over media by the horns, utilizing the potential of Internet radio and live blogging to maximize the station's universality to audiences both here and abroad. This is further enhanced by the wireless television presence in DZRH broadcasts over Destun Satellite Channel 10 and Cable Link Channel 9.

Supporting these is the network conglomerate's modernizing from into special events, such as the mammoth coast-to-coast Alfredo Paras, a record competition and grand-making contest under Pandemy Pinoy, the Manila Bay Swimpers Festival, and even live feeds on submissions of every single match of Pambansang Kasino Minsay Pinggan.

But perhaps it is in this field of public service where DZRH truly earns plaudits, dotted with its cycle of unbinning hours, DZRH-Instructed Operation Baling (in 1979), responding to the needs of the northern areas on the never ends the same devoted and 8 members during disaster-relief operation.

Now to focus, DZRH will celebrate its 70th anniversary with public service initiatives. A three-pronged festive summon will be conducted in response to medical, dental, and optical needs of the listening public. The Public Attorney's office will be on hand to extend free legal advice. The stations will also mount a three-day Job Fair with libraries and the fellowerfields.

It is these bonable ways of paying back the Filipino public, which for seven solid decades has witnessed and supported DZRH as it set the trends on radio and remain for grassroots entertainment and its unending pulse on our daily lives.

Joe Teria interviews President Gloria M. Arroyo

Fred J. Elizalde
MBC Chairman

Don Fleecido Elizalde,
Senior MBC
Chairman

A YOUNG Rafael Yulee

Gen. Jonathan Wainwright surrenders the USAFFE surrender to the Japanese Imperial Army in 1942.

MEL Bonin on air.

Deb Magpayo interviews Gen. Rinehard F. Lagarde, AFP Command Queen

JOE Teria, Vice President and Station Manager

The Immediacy of the News

In many markets, the most popular stations carry little or no music at all. This is generated on the belief that the more information people get, the more they want. Audiences need to feel that they are in tune with up-to-the-minute events.

But the DZRH staff found that audiences want to be informed and entertained — to have the news explained and discussed, not just reported. The news commentary addressed their needs and provided listeners with a vehicle for sounding off about today's political events.

With politics consuming our national psyche, the commentaries by DZRH anchors on current events keep the Filipino public vigilant and concerned, despite serious threats to the lives of many broadcasters and their families. A number of them chose to be vociferous, while a fighter took sanctuary on the Pinoy's penchant for humorous gossip rooms to be just as effective.

But sensitizing issues still tops the stations priorities. DZRH hosts set on 24-hour duty, providing public service round the clock. Disaster relief operations also rely heavily on the support DZRH readers during natural calamities, while its Operation Tulong program has significantly strengthened the bases of volunteerism in civic society.

Believing that audiences have the power to get things done, listeners are also allowed to air their grievances, call on missing relatives, seek help for medical needs, or appeal to government officials to act on issues and complaints.

Indeed, the development of public affairs programming over DZRH is a distinct feature that results in role in the history of Philippine radio. Erstwhile newsbreaks have been expanded into full programs that include live interviews and on-the-spot coverage of important events. The newer talk formats now showcase discussions of subjects like medicine and health, justice and the law, environment and sustainable development, arts and culture, showbiz personalities, and even frank discussions of sex-related matters.

DZRH public affairs programming is consistently being reinvigorated to touch base with issues most throughout the archipelago. Tapping and major regional features are found on the air, further breaking the dominance of English. RITS has also contributed to the station's visibility not just here but also in other countries throughout the Asia-Pacific. And with the introduction of transpacific radio to many homes, the increased access of listeners worldwide via internet radio and the blogosphere, not to mention the nationwide coverage of its incredible robustness and clear access, DZRH will continue to be an unyielding presence in our daily lives.

DZRH News Center today

The old DZRH news room in Harrison

DZRH Fernando spot on its FVR and PE initiatives support from Marcos

FORMER News Director Roy Langit

DZRH ON ITS 70TH YEAR

OPERATION taking at work

'OPERATION TULONG'

It is in the field of public service where DZRH has truly carved its niche in the hearts of many Filipinos. Through Operation Tulong – the station's socio-civic arm first launched in 1978 – corporate social responsibility and a strong sense of volunteerism have propelled a renewed sense of duty to help less fortunate members of Philippine society.

Now under the direct supervision of Mae Bonifacio, the town and women of Operation Tulong have been answering countless medical and dental missions to depressed areas of the country. They are strongly supported by local government units who host the missions and provide logistical support.

Drawing its strength from volunteering support of advertisers, NGOs, and government agencies, Operation Tulong has been made possible by the generous assistance of the Philippine Medical Association, the Department of Health, the Philippine Air Force, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, PACCOM, the local medical clinics, and countless other donors. The Philippines' Association of the Philippines provides free eye examinations, with RBC donating free eyeglasses.

Armed with their motto of embracing the poor, the DZRH staff readily respond to calamities and every sector of the society needs – be it breast cancer, the elderly, or even street children. Public Attorney's Office and a battery of lawyers in the DZRH network have been harnessing to provide free legal assistance. Through job-fairs, companies and firms extend support to the unemployed. And even if it means talking to those in the higher echelons of government or called groups to mediate or start things out, DZRH will only be too happy to serve.

FEEDING program

DZRH Radio sightseeing tour

FIRE extinguish

Signs of the Times 1939.

Filipinos were in a mood of "flapper" exuberance, adopting more and more American ways. Jazz music was in its fad. Apprentices advertising pictured bobbed hair, short skirts, and drinking flasks as modern. Women wore shorter skirts, bobbed their hair, put on more make-up, and exercised the right to vote. Bienvenido Tuason, standard-very last carnival Queen, dressed western-wise, flouting conventional social norms.

The local film industry continued to mimic Hollywood. But while America retained Clara with the Windswept lady, Filipino movie lovers went with the Wizard of Oz. Filipino filmmakers Lamberto Avellana emerged his magnum opus today, even as matinee idol Angelito de la Rosa remained his audience with the role of Lazaro.

Globally, technological innovations reigned the order of the day. The first jet plane took to the air ... British produced the first successful ... Allies, breaking both the first FM transmitter station ... and RCA produced satellite scans ... with NBC, CBS, and ABC launching themselves to publicly demonstrate the power of television.

With European countries at war, the Philippines, however, lent the voice to Nazis' televised wrath. The Philippine Commonwealth government found growing secondary abuse the level of the 10 Commandments commissions to the Soviet Republic. Japanese scouts were sweeping up, and the war was a small occurrence on an international agenda to gain greater control over the region, which was known obviously dependent as mountain markets for the disposition of food products.

Manuel L. Quezon, duly elected President just one year back, successfully opened the Commonwealth Congress sometime in January, beginning the constitutional and pursuing his own ambitions. The Philippine Constitution was made independent of the army and placed under the supervision of the Department of the Interior to prevent it from the task of maintaining peace and order throughout the country. The Department of National Defense was established, headed by the Secretary of National Defense, Manuel Quezon, Jr. Quezon's growing dictatorial tendencies were also evident in his efforts to increase revenue sought to increase revenue in taxation, improve transport, consolidate the mind of Mindanao, and promote local capital and industrialization.

The Philippine Islands were at the cusp of more drastic changes. Under Quezon's regime, many successful improvements in national finances were to take bigger steps toward nationhood even under the clouds of war.

DZRH in Malacañang with President Quezon

ROCELLE de la Rosa in Florante at Laura

DZRH & The Radio Drama

When DZRH resurfaced on air after World War II as DZRH, it began a phenomenal growth period inside what are now known as the Golden Years of Philippine Radio. Within this milieu flourished the radio drama.

Initially favored by soap manufacturing companies, radio soap operas were serialized fiction that presented a predominantly female audience, particularly housewives. Storylines revolved around romance, or the search for a long-lost relative. Several dozen were broadcast by various adaptations of social issues, problems, historical, and revenge.

It all began in 1940 when local Procter Gamble Philippines decided to sponsor a radio drama to help debunk its product. A novel using colonial fiction was born – Kamunsilan, and premiere serials. For days from the characters who sent in real life and inflated them into the story of Laura and Catalino. With the completion of the radio drama from this or the letter, Kamunsilan is

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Querijero

Al-Qaida threatens China over Uighur

HONG KONG—AL-QAIDA IS threatening for the first time to attack Chinese interests overseas in retaliation for the deaths of Muslims in the restive region of Xinjiang, according to a risk analysis group.

The call for reprisals against China comes from the Algeria-based offshoot Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), according to a summary of its report sent to AFP by the international counterterrorism briefing Ansmic.

"Although AQIM appears to be the first arm of al-Qaida to officially state they will target Chinese interests, others are likely to follow," said the report, which was first divulged by the South China Morning Post on Tuesday.

Osama bin Laden's network has not previously threatened China, but the Stirling report said a date for vengeance over Beijing's clampdown in Xinjiang was spreading over the global Jihadist community.

Hundreds of thousands of Chinese work in the Middle East and North Africa, fueling AQIM's interests in Algeria, and many of the group, which has offices in London and Hong Kong providing risk advice to corporate and official clients.

"This threat should be taken seriously," Stirling said, basing its information on people who it said had seen the AQIM instructions.

"There is an increasing pressure of chatter ... among jihadists who claim they want to see action against China.

"Some of these individuals have been actively seeking information on China's interests in the Muslim world, which they could use for targeting purposes." AFP

Ousted Honduran leader issues ultimatum to foes

TEGUCIGALPA—OUSTED HONDURAN PRESIdent Manuel Zelaya, clearly frustrated with stalled negotiations aimed at resolving the country's political crisis, issued an ultimatum to the interim government on Monday: Reinstate me or else.

ZELAYA

Zelaya delivered his message at a news conference in Nicaragua, where he arrived Sunday night following a brief trip to Washington.

At the same time, the de facto government installed by leaders of the coup that forcibly exiled Zelaya on June 28 said it wants life to normal, successfully urging tens of thousands of Honduran teachers and students to return to class on Monday.

Interim President Roberto Micheletti said a Honduran negotiating team could return to the bargaining table as early as this weekend so to end the tensions caused by the coup. Two successive rounds of talks mediated by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias failed to produce a deal.

At the swearing-in ceremony of a new foreign minister on Monday, Micheletti said his team of delegates was "ready for another meeting."

But Zelaya said on Monday that he was "giving the coup an ultimatum."

If the interim government does not agree to reinstate him at the next round of negotiations, he said, "the mediation effort will be considered failed and other measures will be taken." He did not specify what action he might take.

Zelaya accused the Micheletti government of "using" the talks "as a means to distract attention," and said the interim regime had "systematically increased repression" against demonstrators, journalists and others.

Members of Micheletti's administration did not immediately respond to Zelaya's comments.

Arias, the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize winner for his role in helping end Central American civil wars, was expected to announce the date for new talks on Monday, said a Costa Rican government official, who was not authorized to give his name.

In Washington, State Department spokesperson Ian Kelly reiterated United States support for Arias' mediation efforts.

"It is not a process that's being led by the United States of America. We just have to give time for this process to work. And I'll just say we're standing firmly behind President Arias," Kelly said. AP

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Republicans contest Obama's choice for SC

WASHINGTON—UNITED STATES PRESIdent Barack Obama's nominee for the Supreme Court, Sonia Sotomayor, prevailed on Monday to apply the law impartially as Republicans used the first day of her confirmation hearings to repeatedly question her objectivity.

Sotomayor, 55, is widely expected to be confirmed as the first Hispanic justice on the ideologically-divided Supreme Court, whose nine members rule on key Constitutional issues such as the death penalty, abortion and gun rights.

In her opening statement, Sotomayor recounted her "uniquely American" journey as the daughter of Puerto Rican parents who moved from New York housing projects through Ivy League classrooms and on to become an appeals court judge.

And she sought to defang Republican critics, who have portrayed her May 26 nomination by Obama as part of a plan to appoint liberal "activists" on the Supreme Court to achieve changes in social policy.

"Many Senators have asked me about my judicial philosophy.

It is simple: fidelity to the law. The task of a judge is not to make the laws—it is to apply the law," Sotomayor's statement came at the end of the first day of hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee, where Republicans are fighting an uphill battle against her nomination. The hearings are expected to continue for several days.

Republicans have all but conceded they lack the votes to stop the Democratic-run Senate from approving Sotomayor in the life-time post. Many cite both sides of the aisle agree she has outstanding legal qualifications.

"Unless you have a complete meltdown, you're going to get confirmed," Republican Senator Lindsey Graham told Sotomayor, saying he had not decided how he would vote.

Other Republicans had no such doubts, and brought up elements of her judicial record that they said showed she would put personal bias or "empathy" above legal principles.

"We remain focused on issues of the Constitution [and] questions about the philosophy of Judge Sotomayor," Senator Jeff Sessions, the top ranking Republican on the committee, said after Monday's hearing.

He said Sotomayor's record was to some ways "a richer resume critiques of the classic ideal of blind justice."

Sotomayor's positions on a number of important divisive legal issues including abortion and gun rights, would [illegible] Reuters

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Bombers** gun for solo lead /A26

Editor Tobbyrick S. Melendres • Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

SPORTS

■ **2 former champs covet yellow jersey** /A28

SAN Miguel's hopes of forging a deciding Game 7 rests on import Gabe Freeman (foreground), joining the center of his matchup with Ginebra counterpart David West and staying out of foul trouble. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Gutsy Gin Kings try to wrap it up today

By Marc[illegible] R. Castillo

BARANGAY GINEBRA TAKES THE FIRST of two chances to wrap up the Metrolite PBA Fiesta Cup when the Gin Kings sling it out with the San Miguel Beermen tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

Game 6 of the best-of-the-seven series is set at 7 p.m. with momentum logically on the side of the defending champion Gin Kings, who have not only rampaged to hold their own 4-1 series edge but San Miguel four-2 forward to take, but also fitness wizard when they need it.

Shortly after masterfully carving out a 106-86 Game 5 win Monday night, however, coach Ang Ubaldo talked with his emotions in complete check.

"You like to be up 3-2, but we all know what San Miguel is capable of doing," Ubaldo reminded scribes. "We hope we can play better on Wednesday. We hope we can get luckier on Wednesday."

Not many predicted this series to move go past five games. And the most surprising fact is that Ginebra is the one in the lead.

Optimistic about Game 6

A San Miguel win tonight would forge a do-or-die Game 7 on Friday.

"The next game, I'm still very optimistic about it," San Miguel's Alex Compton said. "And I give us the opportunity to be here, there are at least eight other [eliminated] teams out there who would die to be where we are.

"There's nothing to feel bad about being 2-3 down. They need one game (to clinch the title), we need one game (to stay alive), we just need to do things right."

Not since the Tanduay-Shell series at the turn of the century has a title duel featuring one team labeled as an overwhelming favorite and one tagged as a terrible underdog.

The debonaired Turbo Chargers, roaring two-time MVP Benjie Paras, won that series against a San Miguel-like team in the Rhum Masters that had all the trimmings of a powerhouse squad led by Eric Menk, Sonny Alvarado, Jeffrey Cariaso and Pido Jarencio.

Twilight of career

Ginebra hasn't been given much of a chance to prevail with Mark Caguioa out for the season, Arnjay Helterbrand nursing a hamstring injury and Menk in the twilight of his career.

But Ubaldo and his gang have added to the Ginebra legend of never quitting and prevailing despite the odds.

David Noel will again lead the Kings, hopefully in the same dominating manner he did Wednesday night when he scored 15 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter.

Out to back him up will be Helterbrand, who still managed nine points and four assists despite having less than 100 percent, and a slew of role players led by Menk.

The series is looking like a virtual repeat of how Menk also came out of injury bug-hit season to lead the Kings to the title opposite Ato Ular and win the Finals Most Valuable Player award.

Romero's Manila five eyes PBA legends in ABL stint

By Jeanlain N. Papa

FORMER PBA STARS ARE BEING LURED out of retirement to play for the first local professional team that will compete in the Asean Basketball League (ABL) starting Oct. 1 in Singapore.

"We're looking to bring in former pro leaguers to be part of the team," said Rainbow Center owner Mikee Romero, a board member of the first regional play-for-pay league.

"We've already talked to some of them and they're very excited to wear the Philippine jersey again."

Four-time PBA MVP Alvin Patrimonio heads the list of players being tapped to join the Bridgeless league along with Jerry Codiñera, Benjie Paras, Sergei Mosesov, Sunday Uzo, Bong Alvarez, Nelson Asaytono and Manuel Ahanmisi.

"We'll get about 10 players and some others," Romero said during the PBA Rookie camp yesterday at Blakey's 181 Avenue. "The full roster is composed of former PBA players, with three to four ex-pro players in each game."

Both Romero and Asean "Tourism" Commissioner Antonio Tuviera, the former ABC 5, hired the country's venture in the league putting the team from the Philippines against pro squads from Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia.

Asean Abet will call the shots for the league tentatively between Oct. 1 and Nov. 15 with the first conference featuring the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Each team will also be allowed to field one foreign player, who must have played in the home-and-away tournament.

"It gives our basketball players more opportunities to showcase their talents outside the Philippines," said ABC 5 president Bobby Barretto. "Since the format is the same as the PBA, it will open the doors for Filipinos to shine elsewhere in the region."

Romero expect to invite legends Robert Jaworski and Ramon Fernandez for the inaugural season along with Olympic heroes that reigned Hidilyn Diaz.

Tryouts are set on Aug. 15 at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan, according to team manager Erick Arcadio and assistant Albert Tecson.

VERSUS CHIEFS

Bombers gun for solo lead

By Cedelf P. Tupas

UNBEATEN JOSE REAL SHOOTS FOR THE solo lead against Antillano U today in the 85th NCAA basketball tournament at the FEMII Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Heavy Bombers, last year's losing finalists, up to move ahead of the idle San Sebastian Stags in the 2 p.m. game with Ike Clinch, who created a stir with two straight wins before losing to defending champion San Beda.

Both JRU, which is seeking its first title since 1972, and San Sebastian own 3-0 reads.

Perpetual Help tries to barge into the win column against Angelo D Pamaltoon, a guard from Ilaw Buklurin in the 4 p.m. showdown.

Both Perpetual Help and JRU are still reeling off losses with the Great Danes suffering a five-straight (0-5) loss to Mapua last Friday. The Altas bowed to the Letran Knights, 69-74, last Wednesday.

The pressure of handling the Chiefs is on Ist on coach Aldin Ababon Ilo, who relishes one of the deepest rosters in the league.

"It's like every game, we are expected to win because of our lineup," said Ababon Ilo, now on his fourth year managing the Bombers. "That's why we cannot afford to relax."

After entering a near against Letran, 69-66, the Bombers, led by a rejuvenated John Pillora, have left nothing to chance, winning by double digits in the last two games against Perpetual Help and Lyceum Pioneers College.

The Bombers are expected to have their hands full against the Chiefs, who have a strong inside-outside game anchored by dominant Gio Gumtow and swingman Adrian Celada.

"Both of us is what it means to know of being together as a team for the league time," Ababon said.

After crushing Letran and JRU, the Chiefs were crowned behind by the Red Lions, 74-100.

TITLE BIDDER: Dean Francisco strikes a fighting pose in yesterday's press conference at the Pizza Hotel in Pilsbury for his fight against Willie Ryan tight inverter Dumpsite Rubio in Visayas of Pacquiao. The fight is slated in September. JONATHAN CELIS

Mikee: Fiba official has no place in ABL

IN HUDDLE

Keith Cello

SO SAID WELL-HE allies Pilos Asia secretary general Dato Yeoh Choo Hock to be involved in the Asian Basketball League.

This was Mikee Romero's strong reaction when I asked him to comment on the move to bring in Fiba technical commissioner Ismet Ahmed Paul Manansala.

Paul told Dato Yeoh of Malaysia will be on top of the ABL and a tool to World's group that will ensure the technical aspect of the league.

* * *

Mikee said that was the initial plan of the organizers... to install Dato Yeoh as head of the ABL's technical committee.

"But I protested. I told them that if they push through with this plan, I would pull out the Philippine team. They reconsidered. We are giving that post instead to Michael Jotiyanon, a former player of Australia's NBL."

Mikee said the ABL is a profession al league and should, therefore, be independent. It's not true, he clarified, that the ABL board is composed of Fiba-Asia officials.

"It's the team managers who will sit on the board," Mikee said.

* * *

Mikee reminded me of his unforgettable experience with Dato Yeoh two years ago.

"I may have forgiven him but I cannot forget the incident in Jakarta where he did not allow Sam Ekere to play for our outbound team."

Mikee was provoked that the RP-Ilaw Sosa Cooler squad flew to Jakarta to compete in the Senda qualifier to the Champion's Cup.

"We didn't think that we needed any other additional documents for Ekere, a Nigerian, from fellow Brunei, who is also a Nigerian, had been allowed to play for our brother countries on separate passports required," Mikee said.

But Dato Yeoh did not agree, he said.

"He would not allow Ekere to play unless we secured clearance from the Nigerian Basketball Association, at that time it was already too late to get that document. We were caught flat-footed.

"We were practically begging Dato for consideration, based on the fact that Ekere was allowed to play in the same tournament the year before without presenting a clearance from Nigeria."

* * *

Mikee said this particular incident had prompted Patrick "Pato" Gregorio, then the executive director of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas, to resign from his post.

For three days in a row, Pato made an appointment with Dato Yeoh. Mikee said.

"For three days in a row, he did not show up at the appointed place and on the appointed hour. He never got through to him. Consequently, Ekere never got to play," recalled Mikee.

The Philippines was forced to play Ali Filipino without Ekere, who sets rebounds as an import.

"We ended up in second place, but were the defending champion," he said.

Mikee said he cannot allow things like these to happen in the ABL. That's why Pilos-Asia will not have a court in the new league, which he said will be formally launched today, 8 in Singapore.

SPORTSWATCH

U-Tunes Claret run kicks off

CLARET SCHOOL HOSTS SEVEN EVENTS Sunday, Tomas Aquino week with a double-header today inside the Quezon City campus.

Runners—girls aged 4-12 years old and their parents—begin the race at 4 p.m. La Salle Zobel hosts the next leg on Friday at 4:30 p.m. while it's Ateneo's turn on Sunday at 5 a.m.

Meanwhile, today for the ISM MOA 3K and 5K events on Aug. 30 is now open. Registration fee is pegged at P300.00 both events.

For details and online registration, log on to www.runnersandmore.com.ph or visit Mike Fleet at Bonifacio High Street in Makati City.

Pasay anniversary derby today

THE PASAY CITY LOCATIONS (1 PM RACE) the 52nd anniversary today with a P2 million 8-race derby.

More than 100 fights are featured in today's 2-week stakesdash round. Finals will be held on Friday.

Pasay officials include leading champion Manny Dacquiao, Bo Yocson, Freddy gonzo, Ronnie Poon Chiu, Gerry Ramos, Lito Orillaza, Nelson Salud, Philkids Antonio, Benjie Lim, Francisco Ngo, Ramon Ang and Tonyo Cruz.

For inquiries, call 843-1888, 843-1748 or 818-4750.

By Top Choice
By Sun Lauren LP

WORLD TRAVELERS: Ateneo Softball Association Philippines president Jose Henri D. Lhuillier (second) gives final instructions to coaches and members of the RP Stallions, who paid here a visit before their departure yesterday in Saskatoon, Canada, to take part in the world softball championship from July 17 to 26. The team, headed by Pres. Mike Diaz and coaches Zosky Bautista and Robert Santiago, made a surprise announcement after playing second to Japan in the China championship last year. ago.

Figure skating breaks ice at MOA Saturday

By Cedelf P. Tupas

A SLEW OF FILIPINO-AMERICANS, LED BY defending champion Elizabeth Arens, headline the 2009 Philippine Figure Skating Championships starting Sat Saturday at the SM Mall of Asia International Skating Rink in Pasay City.

Arens, bronze medal winner in the 2007

Dottie, 4 others Junior World faves

DOTTIE ARDINA: Looking for No. 4

By Joey Arcano

SAN DIEGO—WITH DOTTIE ARDINA AND AT LEAST FOUR OTHER SOLID prospects leading the way, the Philippines takes a multitude of 46 contenders trying for honors in the 41st edition of the Callaway Junior World golf championships starting Saturday [Wednesday in Manila].

The country's bid in the six age groups (divisions for boys and girls will be featured by 44 players, part of an international field of about 1,300 who have converged in this sun-kissed city of pristine beaches and legendary golf courses.

Ardina and company will try to add to the 23 victories already posted by Team Philippines since Nanette Barbers heads through vole in 1991.

Already tied with Bolivia as the winningest Filipino campaigners here with three titles each, the 15-year-old Ardina seeks to set a local record and her chance for a fourth as a solid as a rock after turning very nice of late last three rounds and placing second in medley.

Delegation head Jerry Hunting feels there is much to look forward to in that year's campaign.

"Aside from Dottie, we have about three potential winners and seven others have missed [out] enough to contend this week," said Hunting, chair of the Amateur Golf Foundation of the Philippines, who is supervising the PJP campaigns.

Miguel Tabuena is flashing the best form in years and the stair of his swing coach Fidel Gibson should put him in the right mood for his last crack at the 13-14 years phase.

Cyan Rodriguez and Rilo Legaspi, part of the historic triple-title winning group in 2008, are going for the 15-17 and 11-12 titles this time while Philippe Wisser-Jimenez trains his sights on a world championship sweep after winning the US Kids European crown in Svalmo.

Also with homes done canned, chances are looking European, Miggy Vie, Dominic Ly and Princess Superal in the 11-12 years division, Jennifer Acevedo in boys' 9-10 and Beatrice Oliveros-Ilas, who was on the verge of victory last year could also figure-publicized in her bids, in the girls' 7-8.

The jet-setting Dottie has been in the Philippines and three US states over the last five weeks. She won the SP Amateur at Eastridge Dec. 20 then two days later retreated to the PWPGA National and then went to Oregon to win the PNGA event before flying to San Diego.

[NOTE]—Since Junior World is always a family affair, even for business [pictured, here is her mother and their grandfather are likewise business owners in Cagayan de Oro], and her Titanic-Eskaera Golfers member Mona Rita Pedroso for Philippe... Each PJP harvests their grandchildren watching the opening parade; hosting at his ultimate's home from years after he back-to-back wins in 1991-92. He was another current kids table playing in the local tee pot here.

SEA GAMES FORECAST

RP 'good for 20 golds' so far

By Jose Mariano

HOORAY! THAILOS GOLD MEDALS.

Philippine Sports Commission chairman Harry Angping yesterday predicted a harvest of 20 to 26 golds as the country in the coming Southeast Asian Games based on data meticulously gathered by the government sports agency.

That is about 60 percent of the 44 golds the Philippines won to place 6th in the 2007 SEA Games in Thailand and way below the forecast 50 to 55 golds by Philippine Olympic Committee chief Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr.

Angping said competitive studies based on the national athletes' performance in the 2005 Manila Games, the 2007 Thailand Games and in several test competitions do not bode well for the country's chances in Laos in December.

The Laos SEA Games, set Dec. 9 to 15, offers a total of 369 gold medals in 25 sports.

The POC has earmarked the 42 gold medalists and 91 silver-medal winners in 2007 as top candidates for the individual-sports gold in Laos.

The majority of the medalists, however, have shown a dip in their performance, according to data collected by the POC.

"Are we going to send all these examinations knowing very well that they have a little chance of winning gold medals?" said Angping, who has earmarked P30 million for the country's participation in the Games. "The PSC is convinced that we are only going to send athletes with gold-winning potentials."

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2 former champs covet yellow jersey

LIMOGES, FRANCE—ALBERTO CONTADOR is playing down tensions between Michael Lance Armstrong at the Tour de France, but the issue over the lack of leadership within Astana's team will continue so long as the two former champions are fighting for the yellow jersey.

On Sunday, the 27-year-old Armstrong told French television that relations between him and the 26-year-old Spanish rider are awkward since just nine stages of the showcase race.

Responding to the Texan's comments during Monday's rest day in Limoges, Contador said: "It's a subject which is causing us new confusion, it's unexpected. For me there are no tensions, I am totally relaxed and focused on the competition."

Armstrong, a seven-time straight Tour champion between 1999-2005, is aiming for an improbable eighth win. Contador, unable to defend his 2007 title last year because of Astana's team ban, is desperate to add to his growing legacy.

He has already won all three Grand Tours of France, Italy and Spain—something Armstrong has not achieved.

Outwardly, neither rider admits they want to fight the other, and both have claimed they are prepared to sacrifice individual ambition for the greater good of the Astana team.

"We eat together at the table and are together on the bus. Often the tensions are higher from the outside than it really is," Contador said.

But undoubtedly both share the same burning inner ambition, and clearly want to win the Tour again.

Ahead of Tuesday's 10th stage, Contador was in second place, two seconds ahead of Armstrong in third place. Brazilian Rinaldo Nocentini of Italy held the yellow jersey overnight, six seconds ahead of Contador.

Those positions were unlikely to change on Tuesday largely flat stages from Tuesday to Thursday, or on Friday's moderately hard mountain stage—so the Tour's most intriguing duel should take a back seat as focus has a few days.

In Montpellier on Tuesday, Armstrong applied pressure on Contador by insisting he would not settle for third place overall, and explained that "the lowest truth is that there is a little tension" between him and Contador.

The reaction from his Spanish teammate on Monday was to cite several riders as Tour contenders—but not Armstrong.

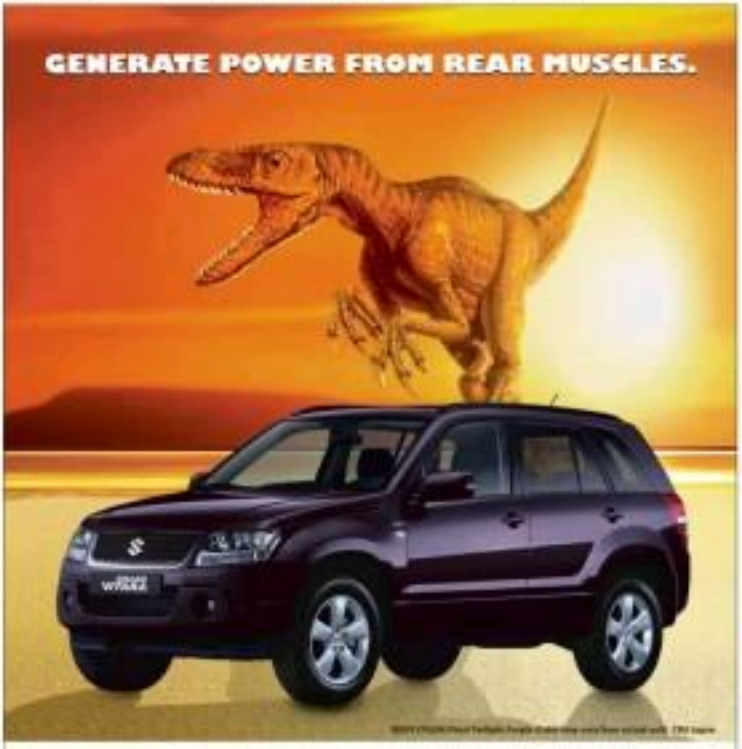
"I think the most dangerous rivals are the Schleck brothers (Frank and Andy)," Contador said.

The tension between Armstrong and Contador, simmering under the surface before the Tour, came fully to light Friday.

CONTADOR. File photo

ARMSTRONG. Reuters

With Astana controlling the peloton and rivals unwilling to attack, it seemed like the seventh stage would grind to an uneventful halt. But Contador could not hold back and smashed late into the final climb up to the Pyrenean ski resort of Ancelle, zooming past Armstrong like the Texan used to do to rivals in his heyday. AP



Police: Wife strangled Gatti with purse strap

RIO DE JANEIRO—POLICE INVESTIGATING the death of former boxing champion Arturo Gatti are working Monday on the assumption his wife strangled him with her purse strap while he drunkenly slept.

While cautioning that nothing is being ruled out, lead investigator Moises Teixeira told The Associated Press he is certain the woman acted alone. Her lawyer, Ivanovic, proclaimed her innocence, saying she was too "fragile" to kill a human.

"It was technically impossible for a third person to have been in the flat," where Gatti was found dead early Saturday, Teixeira said.

Gatti's 23-year-old Brazilian wife, Amanda Rodrigues, told investigators she awoke Saturday about 6 a.m. to find her husband's body in the apartment they rented in Ponto de Galinhas, a seaside resort in northeastern Pernambuco state.

Rodrigues told police she had a fight with Gatti after dinner Friday night and he pushed her to the ground, resulting in minor injuries. Witnesses also reported to police the couple fought and that Gatti was drunk.

Rodrigues' sister, Flavia, told the Folha de S. Paulo's newspaper that "there is no way she could have strangled a man of that size."

Rodrigues' attorney, Gilio Avelino, told the AP by e-mail with Flavia's conclusion.

"She is fragile, young and skinny—how could she kill a boxing champion?" Avelino said. "Where she resides, she possessed he had committed suicide. But she had nothing to do with it." AP

Magic retain center Gortat

ORLANDO, FLORIDA—THE ORLANDO Magic have retained Polish center Marcin Gortat, matching the $34 million, five-year deal offered by the Dallas Mavericks to the restricted free agent.

The Magic surprised—and disappointed—Gortat and the Mavericks on Monday, matching an offer sheet he had to sign.

Gortat's agent, Guy Zucker, said the center "was definitely very disappointed today." He said Gortat was back in his native Poland, where he'd already been telling everyone he was headed to the Mavericks.

Gortat, 25, was hoping to play alongside Jason Kidd and Josh Howard, and, most of all, compete with Erick Dampier for the starting job. Dampier is going into the final year of his contract.

In Orlando, Gortat will likely see spotty playing time behind Howard.

"It was definitely about the opportunity to find out how good he can really be," Zucker said. "He had requested that Orlando not match the offer."

Meanwhile, the Denver Nuggets have acquired guard Aaron Affalo and forward Walter Sharpe from the Detroit Pistons in exchange for a second-round pick in the 2011 NBA Draft...the team said on Monday. AP/Reuters

Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Carrie S. Nuriana

BUSINESS

RP raises $750M from global bond offer

Gov't says issue 'nearly 6 times oversubscribed'

By Nancee W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT ON MONDAY RAISED $750 MILLION or about P36.2 billion through the issuance of 10-year global bonds.

Finance officials said the common-rated bond issue was "nearly six times oversubscribed," showing healthy investor interest in the debt paper.

The bonds were priced at 99.665 percent to yield 8.625 percent, or 322.6 basis points higher than the benchmark US treasury bond rate.

Of the total amount raised, 60 percent came from Asia, a quarter from the United States and 15 percent from Europe.

This is the second international outing for the government following the debut offering of $1.5 billion in January.

"We are very pleased with the re-

AP RACES B2

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **SMC eyes partners** for $1-B dam /B2

■ **San Miguel beer** unit nets P4.86B /B4

■ **BSP expects slight** growth in May remittances /B12

PLDT, Lopez firm close P20-B Meralco deal

By Doris C. Dumlao

TELECOMMUNICATIONS GIANT PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday consented to purchase of a 26-percent stake in the country's biggest power retailer Manila Electric Co. from the Lopez clan for P20.07 billion.

In separate disclosures, the Lopezes' First Philippine Holdings Corp., PLDT and wireless unit Philippine Telephone Corp. announced the completion of the former's sale of 225 million Meralco shares at P50 per share as agreed upon last March.

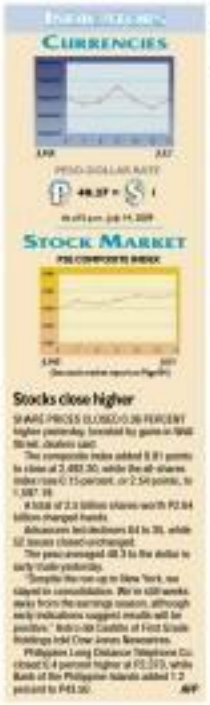
The transaction was implemented through a special block transaction executed at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

This jacked up the PLDT group's stake in Meralco to 38.2 percent. Prior to this deal, PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund accumulated another 10.5 percent of Meralco from the open market.

The stake held by the Lopez family, on the other hand, has been reduced to 13.4 percent. Another influential voting block in Meralco, San Miguel Corp., owns 27 percent after taking over the stake held by the government pension fund Government Service Insurance System.

First Holdings chair Oscar M. Lopez said: "We are very pleased that the transaction be-

PLDT, LOPEZ B3



Stocks close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.36 PERCENT higher yesterday, boosted by gains in SMC Global, dealers said.

The composite index added 0.81 points to close at 2,482.30, while the all-shares index rose 0.15 percent, or 2.54 points, to 1,687.19.

A total of 2.3 billion shares worth P2.84 billion changed hands.

Advancers led decliners 84 to 78, while 52 issues closed unchanged.

The peso averaged 48.3 to the dollar in early trade yesterday.

Despite the run-up in New York, we stayed in consolidation. We're still weeks away from the earnings season, although early indications suggest results will be positive," Rebecca Castillo of First Grade Holdings told Dow Jones Newswires.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. closed 0.4 percent higher at P2,253, while Bank of the Philippine Islands added 1.2 percent to P43.50.

AFP

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Trouble in golf paradise

NOT ANY MEMBERS OF THE MANILA Golf and Country Club have voiced their opposition to recently passed rules that, at first, are aimed at curbing "abuse" by patrons and their guests, at worst, seem to coddle—in a bad way—the wife/husband/kid population as a reason for the upper class.

One such change is a rule that prevents non-members from entering the golf club's premises beyond a designated waiting area near the lobby. In a game who happens to own less caddie than his less smart mate the clubhouse, and turned has to be segregated in the non-members' area that highlights their eccentric status, published one upbeat member I've place where the pursuers, spies, crashers and assistants end").

On top of this, management has also raised the green fee for golfing guests to P5,000 from the old rate of P3,000 (to keep away the poors).

It also raised the annual fee for the use of the club's function room. The small-scale, called the President's Room, now goes for P1,000 per use, but also requires the user to pay a minimum of P3,000 for the food that he and his guests would consume. So the fun-use is P4,000 for use of the

BIZ BUZZ
By the staff

excellent scene," complained another member, pointing out that the bigger function rooms can even move, embarking the beach-change for extended use.

More impressively, several club denizens complained that these changes were made without consulting the general assembly (which meets only once a year).

"But must not the only good thing they did was to renovate the golf course," another said likewise. Boobie L. Jones

But management says...

ACCORDING to our personal-assignment member of Manila Golf, however, the complaints come from a small minority. Of the total "active" members (from a total roster of 550 members, of which about 200 are active).

As a concession to the complainants, the board has already responded by lowering the green fee for Wednesdays (when fewer members use the facilities for some reason) and lifted the guest contribution for that same day.

But weekends and holidays remain subject to the higher fees and new guest contribution because of "numerical evidence" showing a deluge of guests during those days.

"Some members have complained that they cannot play [when] too many guests are around[,]" he said. "Plus we have to make sure the golf course is maintained because P400 million was spent to rehabilitate it."

Of course, it remains to be seen whether these concessions will quiet the critics who seem to have the support of a bigger group of silent (and influential) supporters. —Reporter

Rustin L. Lanzo

'Raises,' please

THE DEFYING chair of Manila's place on the stock market has continued unabated since the entry of clandestine real-estate PLDT and San Miguel Corp. as the biggest trading blocks. But now that the shares price has nearly doubled from the P60-to-share buying price, those who had sold out long ago are gulping their teeth, lamenting that they could have earned more from the shares they had sold.

Alongside the stellar rise of Manila's last week was the run-up of Lopez-related stocks, partly due to talk that the Lopezes may get more than what they had bargained for when their rollout to PLDT was consummated yesterday.

There are talks that PLDT chair **Manuel V. Pangilinan** is under "extreme pressure" from some quarters to do more with the Lopezes' some recall. He'll run the incredible price cut.

MPIC, the celebrated last birthday yesterday, was said to have told some of his close associates that he was not amused by pleadings for such a balance (from of winnings). After all, he's not obliged to give any, and the mix-up wouldn't have happened without his own into the picture in the first place.

But still, he will be a close man all, though not as large as the 20- to 25-percent proposed during that get-to MPIC arrives, some sources said. Boobie L. Bumbler

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SMC eyes partners for $1-B dam

Firm may invite Japanese to form joint venture

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT SAN Miguel Corp. plans to tap two Japanese partners for its $1-billion mothballed proposal to the government to build the Laiban dam as an alternative source of bulk water for Metro Manila.

At the sidelines of San Miguel Brewery Inc.'s first annual stockholders meeting yesterday, San Miguel president Ramon Ang also told reporters that the Laiban proposal had always been management and will soon roll out to be challenged rivals and other interested parties to make their own studies and submit their own offer to the government.

Ang said one foreign partner would provide technical expertise while another would provide financial security, estimating that the project would cost at least $1 billion.

Pending official statements that the project was dreamed, in secrecy, Ang said that San Miguel had long disclosed its intention to submit an unsolicited proposal.

"What we are interested need only to submit a letter of intent to prove that they are financially and technically capable to undertake it," Ang said, adding that the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System could clarify the background of the participating companies.

"Even if we ask if San Miguel is willing to share the results of our studies, of course not! It's the policy of other companies to do their own research," he said. "Our offer is very transparent. But of course, to the government, that is the best deal to have a copy of our technical studies and financial studies, so we will give them."

San Miguel had been studying the project for the last two years, Ang said, notwithstanding skepticism from others that this was now viable.

"The only (major) source of bulk water for Metro Manila is Angat Dam. But if there's an earthquake and the dam is damaged, where do we get the water?" Ang said. "That's why we proposed that we are alternative to ensure security of water supply, also, with the fast-growing population in Metro Manila, there could be a water shortage very soon. So our offer is very timely."

He said San Miguel would not be offended if another group were to bag the project, as long as the dam project be completed.

According to government regulations, unsolicited proposals under the build-operate-transfer system and its variants will be subject to a "Swiss challenge," in which other interested investors will be invited to submit their own proposals, within a time limit, and project will have the right to match the best proposal from the challengers.

San Miguel has yet to hear from the MWSS on its proposal after the deadline to challenge it lapsed last July 6, Ang said.

Ang earlier said the "take or pay" provision that could require MWSS or the two private water concessionaires to pay for a fixed volume of raw water from the San Miguel-led joint venture, whether the supply was actually used or not, Ang said the minimum area would be being discussed.

The dam will be built at the Kaliwa River basin in Tanay, Rizal. A reservoir of about 28,000 hectares on the slope of the Sierra Madre mountain range will be drained. The dam aims to provide an average 1.81 billion liters per day (bld) to about 3.6 million people in southern Metro Manila. Its proposed site has a hydropower component that will produce about 23 megawatts of electricity.

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EASY PHA-MAX, the Wheatgrass Authority turns 2!

After a very successful launch in the Philippines in 2007, Easy Pha-max Philippines, Inc. marks another significant and remarkable milestone as it turns two this July 18. Licensees from Malaysia and the Philippines, including its highly successful hallmark partners gather to celebrate this momentous event at the Quad Tower Hotel in Makati City.
Easy Pha-max's flagship product –wheatgrass, has been in existence for over 12 years, and is sold in 10 countries worldwide. In the Philippines, Easy Pha-max Wheatgrass is available through independent business partners from all over the country or by free delivery through the wheatgrass hotline, nationwide. Manufactured with award-winning technology using aeroponic farming and hydroponic systems, Easy Pha-max is the leader with more and more people realizing the issues and myths are false, pesticides-free, bacteria-free, and 100 percent pure. Easy Pha-max Wheatgrass comes in powdered capsule form and offers consumers the convenience of consuming only one to two of the day. Research and clinical studies have confirmed its superior health benefits, and it is complete food that contains 13 vitamins, 10 minerals, 17 amino acids, chlorophyll, phytonutrients and over a 100 types of enzymes. Starting July 18, 2009, Easy Pha-max AND 40 THE KIND OF ALKALINE FOODS. Easy Pha-max wheatgrass offer many roles in preventing cancer, diabetes, blood disorders AND HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.
Easy Pha-max Philippines, leveraging on a BLUE OCEAN business platform, envisions itself to be the "Largest e-Herbs Center" in the world, supplying wheatgrass and other RICH HERBAL products to every household in the country. With this clear goal in mind, the company espouses values of integrity, technology and entrepreneurial spirit by promoting the healthcare industry and uplifting the Filipino entrepreneurship. Attesting Easy Pha-max's 2nd Anniversary Celebration on July 18, 8am - and deserving consumers potential through EASY PHA-MAX's Wheatgrass business plus chance to win all-expenses paid trip to Malaysia. Dalian and Beijing/China. For inquiries on the business opportunity we can offer, log in to www.easyphamax.com.ph, call 899-1111 or text-two 1-800-10-899-1111. Dial and present this article at the event venue and get the early bird ticket rate.

Phoenix set to open oil terminal

By Amy R. Remo

PUBLICLY LISTED PHOENIX Petroleum Philippines Inc. is set to begin operations of its terminal facility in Galera, Batangas by the end of the month, with initial imports expected to reach some 3 million liters in petroleum products.

The Galera terminal sits on a 3.5-hectare property. Phoenix Petroleum had acquired early this year from Philippine Investment Management Inc. It has a capacity to hold 30 million liters of finished petroleum products, said company COO Ernesto de Guzman.

In a briefing, De Guzman said the terminal located within the Phoenix Petroleum and Industrial park (formerly the Batangas Union Industrial Park) will be inaugurated on Thursday next week.

The company plans to source its oil requirements from either Taiwan or Singapore, De Guzman said.

"Initially we will import 3 million liters, then eventually, 10 million liters. We're willing to sell to other oil companies," De Guzman said.

Phoenix also plans to put up some 100 stations in Luzon over the next three years. Currently, Phoenix has only nine stations on the island.

RP raises $750M from global bond offer

From page B1

sale of the transaction, it represents the lowest yield we have ever achieved in a 10-year benchmark (dollar-denominated) global offering," National Treasurer Roberto B. Tan said.

Finance Secretary Margarita B. Teves said the strong investor response reflected the continued confidence in the policies and economic management of the government, particularly in responding to the global economic crisis.

Credit Agricole Indosuez and Deutsche Bank acted as joint lead managers and joint bookrunners for the transaction.

The issuance of the global bonds came in the wake of a revision by government economic managers of the budget deficit program to P320 billion after the most recent report of P139 billion.

The revision was due to the downscaling of the economic growth target to between 0.0 and 1.0 percent from a range of 3.1 to 4.1 percent.

International credit watchers assigned the latest Philippine government issue varying degrees of investment grade ratings.

Fitch Ratings gave it a 'BB' rating, which means that the bond is more prone to changes in the economy. The rating has a "stable" outlook.

Fitch expressed concerns over the country's weak revenue performance of the Philippine government, "implying its underlying structural fiscal weakness, which needs to be addressed in addition to the cyclical deterioration and in spite of the improvement in the overall fiscal balance in recent years."

Standard & Poor's gave the issue a 'BB-' rating or above the same as Fitch's except for the negative qualifier, which denotes the likelihood of a downgrade.

"The sovereign credit ratings on the Philippines derive support from the apparent resilience of the sovereign's external sector, which, otherwise an improving liquidity profile continues to leave external liquidity risk despite the extremely challenging external environment," S&P said.

Moody's Investors Service gave the second rating of 'Ba' with a positive outlook. Moody's assessed the issuance was speculative and subject to high risk although this was likely to be upgraded.

"The positive rating outlook was affirmed in early 2009, taking into account the resiliency evident in the country's balance of payments and external liquidity position in the face of the global recession," Moody's said. "At the same time, it factors in the strained state of public finances."

PLDT, Lopez firm close ₱20-B Meralco deal

From page B1

Communications, a wholly owned subsidiary of PLDT.

Meralco's share price has also reflected since the entry of San Miguel and PLDT as strategic investors, closing at P388 yesterday, and market capitalization based on yesterday's close amounted to P194 billion.

Ayala Land Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. are also reportedly eyeing Meralco

Biz Buzz

From page B1

"Valuations today are much high-er," he said. — Doris C. Bumatay

Do-or-dare

HERALCITE defiance of gravity during last week's stock market trading was due partly to persis-tent talk of a "buy-me-out-or-I-buy-you-out" challenge thrown down by San Miguel president Ramon S. Ang to PLDT's big boss MVP.

Observers speculate that the target price for the do-or-dare among the three stands at P200-a share, which coincidentally was quoted by SGA as expenses in early June as a print San Miguel would be "crazy" not to accept.

Asked by Biz Buzz whether such rumors are true, SGA did not deny that there was such a do-or-dare challenge. But he in-dicated that a P200-a-share price was no longer an appealing

Chasing Liberty

SCARE STOCK brokers are eying feed over when they claim to be blatant cases of insider trading on Liberty Telecom Holdings, whose shares were unknown last week-at-ter a four-year trading suspension.

They rumors that several bro-kerage houses owned by influ-ential personalities had gobbled up shares as soon as trading re-sumed and three steered one to be among the brokers tapped for the cross sale of shares acquired by San Miguel Corp. Could they have profited from such advance information that the shares would be crossed at P1.25 each? That's for the PSE management to find out. — Boots C. Bumatay

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San Miguel beer unit nets ₱4.86B

Up 4% from a year ago

By Doris C. Dumlao

SAN MIGUEL BREWERY INC., the flagship food and drink unit of diversifying San Miguel Corp., yesterday reported a 4 percent rise in first-semester net profit to P4.86 billion over a year ago on modest net sales growth.

At the sidelines of SMB's very first annual stockholders' meeting yesterday, SMB chair and San Miguel president Ramon Ang told reporters that the company's full year cash flow is measured by earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) could hit P4.60 billion.

For the future, he said prospects were even better given that SMB would purchase parent San Miguel's entire overseas beer operations.

"SMB has the financial capabilities to complete the deal whether through internal cash generation or a little bit of bank credit. We hope to be able to finish it within the next couple of months," Ang said when asked whether SMB will sell new shares to its strategic partner Kirin Brewery of Japan.

In its disclosure yesterday, SMB said its net sales revenues for the first six months rose 4.2 percent year-on-year to P24.8 billion. Sales volume reached 46 million cases.

Operating income amounted to P7.6 billion in the first semester, up 6 percent from a year ago. "Earnings growth was driven by continued cost management efforts and more value per customer point," the company said.

Earlier this year, SMB raised P30.8 billion from a record-breaking local bond debut. Proceeds were used to pay down the domestic beer brands and brewery land assets from its parent company San Miguel.

BDO tops remittance market in 2008

By Michelle V. Reyes

BANCO DE ORO (BDO), which emerged as the country's biggest bank in terms of assets last year, has grabbed the biggest market share in remittances in 2008, displacing Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI).

According to documents from the central bank, BDO facilitated about $4.3 billion in remittances sent to the Philippines by overseas Filipinos last year, making it the biggest remittance bank. This accounted for 10.7 percent of the $39.4 billion in remittances inflows to the country in 2008.

The remarkable performance of BDO, which was the third biggest remittance bank in 2007, was boosted by its acquisition last year of Equitable PCI Bank, which used to have a sizable share of the remittance market.

BPI, which used to be the top bank in terms of remittances facilitated, had a 10.59 percent share or $3.75 billion of the remittance market last year.

Landing in the third spot was Philippine National Bank, which accounted for $2.6 billion, or a 10-percent share, of the total remittances last year. PNB fell from second spot in 2007.

Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. maintained the fourth spot, covering $1.2 billion or a 12.5-percent share. Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. improved its ranking by a notch and landed in fifth. RCBC facilitated $1.25 billion or 7.44 percent of the total remittances last year.

Remittances, which grew 13 percent last year, were one of the major income sources of banks in 2008.

This year, the central bank expects remittances to post flat growth given the impact of the global economic crisis on employment opportunities abroad. But monetary officials said maintaining last year's $16.4 billion in remittances would be enough to support growth in consumption and of the overall economy.

Most banks that engage in the remittance business like wise see a flat, if not a modest, growth in remittances.

In an earlier interview, BDO chair Teresita Sy-Coson said the bank agreed with projections by the central bank that remittances would not contract this year, contrary to predictions by some analysts. Labor and monetary officials said last year's remittances of $16.4 billion would be sustained given that deployment of Filipinos to join other road crews need to be stepped.

BDO became the country's biggest bank in terms of assets last year with its acquisition the previous year of Equitable PCI Bank.

Water utility raises capital to ₱8.88B

By Jerry G. Rosca

THE SECURITIES AND Exchange Commission has approved the increase in capital stock of MWC Water Services Inc. (MWSC) to P8.88 billion from P4.1487. The private corporation's primary purpose is to provide water and sewerage services in the Philippines.

Disclosure statements to the Philippine Stock Exchange showed that of the approved increase of P2.66 billion, Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) subscribed to 1.92 billion shares, while Metropolitan Diversified Holdings Inc. took the remaining 741.4 million as through the conversion of certain shareholders' advances to equity.

MPIC now owns 55.41 percent, while DMCI holds 44.59 percent of the issued and outstanding capital stock of DMWC.

The DMCI and MPIC consortium took over some nine concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc. from the Lopez group in 2007. The private concession will expire in 2022.

Maynilad serves 6.4 million customers out of 9.9 million people living in its concession area. The west zone covers 11 cities in Metro Manila and five towns and cities in nearby Cavite province.

The water concessionaire is currently seeking a 15-year extension of its contract with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

DISCLOSURES

PHINMA INC. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 14 at 10 a.m. at the Manila Polo Club in Makati. Stockholders of record as of July 23 will be entitled to attend and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

LIBERTY Telecoms Holdings Inc. has acquired 8.8 million of the company's author last capital stocks from PCI Bank for P1.8 billion.

* * *

SAN MIGUEL Brewery Inc. has declared a cash dividend of P0.11 a share, payable on Aug. 10 to all stockholders of record as of July 28.

* * *

BOSTON Copper Silver Mines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 20 at 2 p.m. at the Filipinas Greenhills, San Juan. Stockholders of record as of July 1 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. *Compiled by Cipi Hanna, Inquirer Research*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of July 14, 2009

CURRENCY

July 14, 2009 Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	47.4100	1.000000	47.4100
Japan	Yen	0.519101	0.010951	0.2464
United Kingdom	Pound	76.9618	1.623560	73.4197
Hong Kong	Dollar	6.1240	0.129182	6.1240
Switzerland	Swiss Franc	44.0000	0.928111	44.0000
Canada	Dollar	43.7700	0.923267	43.7700
Singapore	Dollar	33.0000	0.696131	33.0000
Australia	Dollar	34.1100	0.719555	34.1100
Bahrain	Dinar	125.8000	2.653503	125.8000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	12.5900	0.265612	12.5900
Brunei	Dollar	33.1000	0.698208	33.1000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.0041	0.000086	0.0041
Thailand	Baht	1.3900	0.029320	1.3900
UAE	Dirham	12.9000	0.272100	12.9000
EU	Euro	67.0000	1.413300	67.0000
Korea	Won	0.0400	0.000844	0.0400
China	Yuan	6.9400	0.146384	6.9400
Taiwan	Dollar	1.4600	0.030801	1.4600
Macau	Pataca	5.9100	0.124710	5.9100
India	Rupee	0.9900	0.020885	0.9900
Malaysia	Ringgit	13.4000	0.282648	13.4000
New Zealand	Dollar	34.0000	0.717100	34.0000
Sweden	Krona	6.0000	0.126558	6.0000	
Kuwait	KD Dollar	172.0000	3.629048	172.0000

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Singapore GDP spurt boosts Asian revival hopes

Shares in region up, follow encouraging rally on Wall Street

A WOMAN puts the final touches to the panorama frame of a shopping center that is due to open shortly at Orchard Road, Singapore's central shopping district, Singapore...Its first Asian economy to report GDP data for April-June, said its GDP rose at an annualized and seasonally adjusted rate of 20.4 percent, the fastest rate in nearly six years. REUTERS

SINGAPORE/SYDNEY—SINGAPORE'S economy roared out of recession in the second quarter and a measure of domestic business confidence jumped in June, raising hopes it can hold lead a broader global recovery in the second half of 2009.

Asian shares rose, following a Wall Street rally sparked by positive comments on financial shares from influential analyst ahead of a slew of bank earnings this week, beginning with Goldman Sachs later on Tuesday.

US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said he was optimistic other major economies could see growth this year and there was bright new s on closely watched British house prices, which a survey showing the slowest decline in two years.

In Singapore, the first Asian economy to report gross domestic product data for April-June said a bellwether for global trade, GDP rose at an annualized and seasonally adjusted rate of 20.4 percent, the fastest rate in nearly six years and following two quarters of contraction.

The figure is more better than analysts had forecast, but they warned that growth was driven by the volatile pharmaceuticals sector and doubts remained about the sustainability of the recovery, which is closely linked to major export markets such as the United States and Europe that are still weak.

"This will be the first of a number of GDP reports that will show data is recovering after a weak first quarter," said David Cohen of Action Economics.

"There is still a lot of uncertainty clouding the global outlook. The unemployment rate around the world is still rising, demand in major export markets such as the United States and Europe

BUSINESS

BSP expects slight growth in May remittances

Analysts say RP won't sink into recession

THE PHILIPPINES WILL LIKELY avoid a recession this year due to remittances, strong consumption, low inflation and interest rates and high liquidity, business analysts said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a forum at the Philippine Stock Exchange, they said the economy didn't grow in the second quarter and the momentum is expected to be sustained for the whole of 2009.

"The performance of the stock market mirrored the performance of the economy," said PSE president Francis Lim, citing the composite index, which has risen 20.2 percent since the start of the year.

Eduardo Francisco, president of BDO Capital and Investment Corp., said there was about P1.2 trillion ($24.6 billion) of liquidity in the system.

"My clients are seeing growth... they are just looking for avenues to invest," he told reporters.

The optimistic forecasts were in contrast to those of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which have forecast a contraction of 8.5 to 1 percent, respectively, for the Philippine's this year.

They cited the gross domestic product (GDP) of only 0.4 percent in the first quarter of 2009 as evidence of a slowing economy.

Anne Simmel, chief investment officer of property giant Ayala Land Inc. said the country's property sector was up 5.1 percent.

He also floated that to counteract positive GDP growth despite the global turmoil, huge remittances from the millions of Filipinos working overseas, inflation falling to 22-year lows and the reduction in interest rates.

"Consumer spending remains robust," Simmel boldly said in saying and the Philippine business outsourcing industry is still thriving. Francisco said, "We are really in a positive growth scenario. It looks like a well investment haven."

Jose Sison, head research at AB Capital Investor, said Mr. computer had originally forecast a 0.4 percent drop in GDP this year but that might be raised due to signs the economy performed better in the June quarter. AFP

Gov't officials cite continuing demand for workers abroad

By Michelle V. Rosca

DESPITE THE GLOBAL DOWNTURN, recruitment to the Philippines may have slightly grown in May as Filipinos remain the top labor-source choice abroad.

Antonio Tenazas Jr., governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, said remittances in May likely grew between 2 and 3 percent from the P1.4 billion registered in the same month last year.

Thousands of overseas Filipinos workers have been laid off, following the collapse of the US financial sector that fueled the economic downturn. But labor officials earlier said the number of Filipinos newly deployed abroad more than offset the OFWs that had been sent home. Deployment, they said, remained at a double-digit level.

Job cuts were high in the financial and manufacturing sectors, they said. But other sectors, such as health care and construction, continued to increase demand for labor.

Tenazas said the rise in deployment and the start of the school year, which forced many OFWs to send tuition money to their families, helped fuel remittance growth in May.

The projected growth of remittances in May could bring the average increase for the first five months of the year to between 2.5 and 2.7 percent from the $6.4 billion posted in the same period last year.

If the projections hold true, overall remittances could exceed the government's official forecast of zero growth this year.

Tenazas said flat growth in remittances was actually a conservative estimate, noting that the gradually stabilizing economy could help also increase deployment of Filipinos abroad.

"I'd rather we are seeing in the global economy sentiment, specifically the signs that confidence is in the advanced economies are slowly driven, then this could eventually lead to higher remittances," Tenazas could report last year.

Last year, remittances grew a hefty 12 percent to $26.4 billion.

Some analysts said remittances would likely contract this year because advanced economies were in the grip of recession. They said that the United States was still the top source of remittances sent to the Philippines.

But the BSP said a contraction was unlikely. Tenazas said the BSP maintained its forecast that remittances would reach $16.4 billion this year, translating to zero growth from that of last year. But he also said the BSP would review the forecast.

Tenazas said a slowdown in the growth of remittances was expected because of the crisis. But if remittances were to be maintained at the same level as that of last year, the money sent to would help support growth in consumption and the overall economy.

The government expects the economy to grow between 0.8 and 1.8 percent this year.

BOP seen at a surplus, may hit $1B by yearend

A $1 BILLION SURPLUS IN THE country's balance of payments (BOP) may be reported this year, as inflows of foreign exchange appear to be healthier than initially anticipated, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

In an official forecast, the BSP said the BOP would record only a $700-million surplus for the year.

But BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the projection would be reviewed. He said a BOP surplus of at least $1 billion could be a more realistic estimate.

Tetangco cited the government's sale yesterday of $750 million worth of global bonds.

"It will help boost the country's BOP until proceeds can be fully withdrawn by the state to fund expenditure requirements," he added.

Unless the government withdraws all proceeds of the bond sale, the foreign currency inflow would support the BOP. The central bank did not take into account the government's recent bond sale when it set its BOP forecast for 2009.

The government had no intention of selling more bonds, after it raised $1.5 billion from a bond deal in January.

But the government later revalued it needed more funds to fund its expenditure program for the year, saying the crisis had caused tax collection to dwindle.

A closely watched economic indicator, BOP is the difference between the inflows and outflows of foreign currencies to and from the Philippines.

A surplus in the BOP adds to the country's gross international reserves (GIR), or the country's total reserves of foreign exchange. GIR indicates a country's capacity to purchase imports, pay off foreign debts and engage in other commercial transactions with the rest of the world.

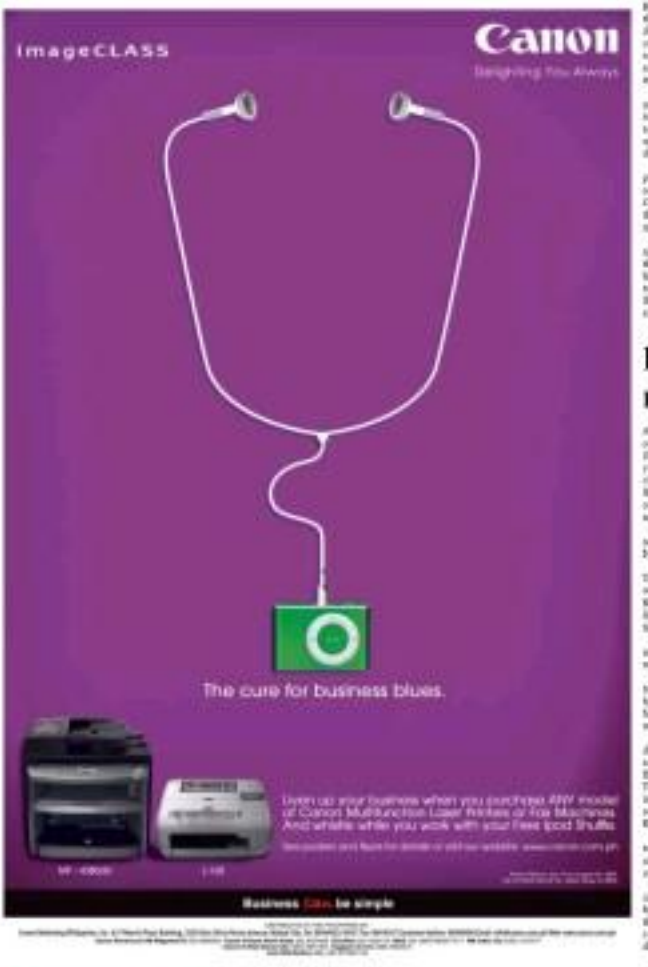
As of end-May the country's GIR stood at a record $37.3 billion. Monetary officials said the level of GIR indicated that the country was not suffering from any liquidity problem and had managed to stay afloat despite the global downturn.

"Latest figures already show that BOP surplus was above $2 billion, and so the full year figure could be higher than the earlier forecast of $700 million," Tetangco told reporters yesterday.

According to data released earlier by the central bank, the country registered a BOP surplus of $2.134 billion in the first four months of the year.

Monetary officials said there might be net dollar outflows in the second half that could trigger a drop in the BOP surplus.

But they also said that the surplus could exceed the current official estimate of $700 million and hit the billion-dollar mark by year's end. Michelle V. Rosca



MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Hangaway

TREND: Galant sports a slimmer look than models this.

THE GPS navigational system installed inside the new Galant should be considered a breakthrough.

New Galant puts Mitsubishi in right direction

Text and photos by Charles E. Bahas

WE WERE LIKE SOLdiers waiting to receive our mission order. Coming from different starting points around Metro Manila, all we knew was that we will be heading south toward an undisclosed location in Tagaytay City. For instance, this writer was assigned to proceed to Citimotors on Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City.

What is more interesting is that we will all be riding in the new Mitsubishi Galant's GPS navigation system to guide us to our destination.

Yes, you read it right. Mitsubishi's latest midsize sedan model is equipped with a GPS navigational system that should be considered a breakthrough, considering that the GPS device available here lacks local map support.

The GPS device from Audio Video Technology offers a 6-inch by-4-inch color display.

180 percent

Developed and provided by Asia Map Philippines, the map covers 100 percent of Metro Manila and national highways road network and has 12,869 points of interest. For Metro Manila and 40.27% countrywide.

The turn-by-turn voice instructions took some time before we got used to them. At times, it runs late in prompting which lane to travel to take.

Nonetheless, the experience with the device was quite laudable as we finally reached our destination—Mitsubishi Showroom on JP Rizal Road in Tagaytay City—without so much difficulty from our electronic guide.

Using the GPS device almost distracted this writer because the new Galant is one luxurious sedan.

Exudes class

While Mitsubishi's other sedan, the Lancer ES, exudes power and aggressive, the new Galant, on the other hand, sports a cleaner look that exudes class.

The new smoke-tinted grille looks better than its predecessor's split version while the sedan's front look is more pleasing to the eyes.

While the trip that morning was quite short, one could wonder that the new Galant's cabin is built to provide comfort to its occupants no matter how long the drive may be.

The new Galant's cabin is generously covered with glove-soft leather—from seats and steering wheel to door trims and center console box's top cover.

It's also equipped with other comfort features including power-adjustable front

MPG: 32 >>

WITH STEERING-WHEEL-MOUNTED controllers, driver's comfort is assured.

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SUN CELLULAR
Better network, better value.

The cost of keeping them up and about

By Tessa B. Salazar

Contributor

IN THE POWERFUL TUG-OF-war between rival pickups the Nissan 4x2 AT and the Ranger 4x2 AT, which rings most in your pockets?

Performance and design-wise, each has played on its own strengths. For city and highway driving, the Ranger boasts wider and heavier fenders provide a more stable and sedan-like ride. Its automatic transmission gaining fuel smoother at the shifts, with the lower gear ratios optimizing engine torque. Its longer power band enables it to accelerate faster. Plus, the unique 9-crossmember chassis adds resilience.

HAVANA. Perhaps the only SUT (sport utility truck in the country).

CHOOSE your pickup: Will it be the smooth-driving Navara (top) or the fuel-sucking Ranger?

Better view

The taller Ranger, on the other hand, provides a better view of the road and is more suited to unpredictable country roads. For its weight, the Ranger still provides precise, controlled handling. Its revolutionary rotational damper makes use of the air rushing past it. The front grille, in particular, directs air where it is highly needed to aid in efficient air-conditioning performance and engine cooling for this turbocharged TDCi diesel-fuel machine.

Here's the line, however, a significant part of the enjoyment of driving these pickups, or any vehicle for that matter, is the value you get for every hard-earned peso you pay to own and drive one. So, on top of the usual prices of the two pickups (which this writer already revealed in the last part), here's a partial list of the cost of maintaining each (see chart below) for the first 60,000 km (the first three years, on average). Prices may per dealer. Inquire at 17 main dealers of Universal Motor Corp. and at 20 dealers of Ford Autoworld.

The list, however, does not include labor costs (which also vary) as well as other parts to be maintained such as radiator coolant, transmission fluid for AT, transfer case fluid, wheel-bearing grease seal, grease, brake caliper kit for front and rear, and seal rings. This site does not include the depreciation in value of each vehicle that owners could incur.

For more information and correct inquiries, log on to ford.com.ph and nissan.com.ph.

	RANGER 4X2 AT	NAVARA 4X2 AT
Engine oil	P10,200 (170/every 17 km)	P18,000 (150/every 15 km)
Oil filter	P1,120 (P560/every 5 km)	P 8,800 (P 110/every
Air filter	P2,240 (P1,120/every 30 km)	P12,600 (P2,100/every 60 km)
Fuel filter	P7,360 (P1,022/every 30 km)	P7,200 (P1,440/every 20 km)
Brake Fluid	P960 (every 40 km)	P1,800 (120/every
Filter: diff oil	P960 (every 40 km)	P960 (every 40 km)

NISSAN intends to close the gap between a luxury SUV and a workhorse in terms of creature comforts and styling with its Navara.

THE NEW Ford Ranger's new front design is course-wheels sculpted surfaces and shapes mixed with precise execution. These details are critical to achieving the modern, muscular look that today's truck owner wants.

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by Ingrid Lazar
Marketing Director
Interbrands Limited
YMMA Awardee for Brand Management, 2009

Session 3: Creating a Health Movement as Brand Activation
by Ming Arcega,
Marketing Manager,
Farmers Brands (A YMMA Awardee for Marketing Management, 2008)

Session 4: Choosing and Excelling in Your Market Niche
by Michelle de Guzman-Salvacion, President,
Ex Ltd. Management & Marketing Services
YMMA Awardee for Entrepreneurial Marketing, 2008

Session 5: Igniting New Market Space
by Bart Chan,
Managing Director,
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MANSMITH AND FIELDERS, INC.

Mazda Philippines introduces Mazda3 Limited Series

MAZDA3 LIMITED SERIES HAS ARRIVED.

It's the compact car we love, now with enhancements, to give you a more exhilarating "Zoom-Zoom" experience!

Living up to its Zoom-Zoom identity, Mazda Philippines proudly introduces its newest addition to the Mazda3 family: the Mazda3 Limited Series. It's a complete vehicle package perfect for today's highly active and active lifestyle.

Mazda3 has been voted Mazda's best-selling car in the world—as endorsed by the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2008 Thailand Initial Quality Study, a proof of its excellent driving performance and stylish design that has been widely acclaimed by customers all over the world.

Launched in June 2003, the Mazda3 has become a widely popular compact vehicle that has sold to more than 1.01 consumers. Moreover, it has won 94 global automotive awards to date—including car of the year awards in several countries—as confirmation of the great reputation the Mazda3 enjoys with customers and automobile critics. Throughout the years, Mazda3 has established itself as a superb statement of individuality and pioneering, designed and built to sustain the driving experience on the road.

MAZDA3 Limited Series

Reinforcements

"The Mazda3 has always been known for its spirited and sporty performance as well as its edgy looks. Its Limited Series comes with appointments that truly befit the nameplate as well as its discerning customers," says Mazda Philippines Brand Manager Prado Castillo.

To give the Mazda3 a sportier impression and to improve its aerodynamics, the Mazda design team presents a bodykit type front spoiler for the Mazda3 1.6L S Limited variant, while the Mazda3 1.6L V Limited, on the other hand, has been equipped with slip-type rear spoiler.

The Mazda3 1.5 L S variant has been given new front fog lamps therefore boosting Mazda3's marque as a benchmark for style. Side skirts are added for both variants, too. Add to these is the distinctive exhaust finish-

ers that is engineered to durability under high-heat conditions of the times time giving fresh exhausts more refined looks.

These are the enhancements that the Mazda3 Limited Series has to offer making Mazda3 as the finest brand ambassador of Mazda Premium of its class: power, class leading features and bold styling. There's no denying that Mazda3's sensible beauty is undeniably extreme and edge with enhancements like these that are expressed exquisitely and luxuriously in this limited series.

The Mazda3 Limited Series offers the same punchy and edgy performance that Mazda3 has been known for. Equipped with a Mazda-branded MZR engine that accounts up to 103 hp and torques at 145 Nm, Mazda3 coaxes an optimum power to stretch your journey giving you a driving experience that is linear, lively and responsive.

This MZR engine is paired with a 4-speed fuel-economic transmission that gives you the best of both worlds—full automatic for relaxed driving in the city or semi-manual shifting for a thrilling sporty drive. Mazda3 rides very refined and responsive for it is equipped with an ultra-rigid body and a well-balanced suspension.

New Galant puts Mitsubishi . . .

From page B3-1

seats, rear-adjustable headrest, self-leveling power sunroof, and rear automatic rear-assistable to protect the rain passenger from the rain.

The steering wheel is also equipped with various switches including the controls for the entertainment system and shift buttons to manually control the eight 1:4-speed automatic transmission.

The new Galant, which comes in a single variant, the 3L, is powered by a 2.4-liter Mitsubishi Innovative Valve-timing Electronic Control system (Mivec) engine that gives this 5-seater a maximum power of 168 horses (at 6,350 rpm).

"While the new Galant's competition may be powered by larger or powerful engines, we believe the new Galant's eff-cient and reliable engine, excellent build quality, excellent interior and exterior appointments plus its very competitive price (P1.588 million) should make car buyers think many times even before considering the other brands," said Teodoro Fernandez, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp.'s assistant vice president for marketing services.

THE NEW Galant

Electric cars could dominate US roads in 2030

SAN FRANCISCO—ELECTRIC CAR sales could jump to 90 percent of US light vehicle sales in 2030 if consumers don't have to buy batteries themselves, according to a University of California, Berkeley study to be released on Monday.

A company called Better Place said emerging retails plans to offer pay-per-mile plans, similar to cell phone minutes. A family would buy a car but Better Place would own the battery, offer charging stations, and swap out batteries as needed to extend the driving range.

The cost of building charging systems will be more than $100 billion over the next couple of decades, although fuel-related savings due to less vehicle pollution could be $120 billion, according to the study by economist Thomas Becker.

The main benefit to drivers would be cars with price tags and operating costs similar to or less than gasoline models.

Renault-Nissan is making cars for the Better Place project. Better Place has said its system would be cheaper than using gasoline. The Berkeley analysis predicted the per-mile cost of making and changing batteries, including the cost of building a charging system, would be similar to or sharply less than a gasoline car, depending largely on whether prices of gasoline rise. Reuters

VIOS

Toyota launches new sporty Vios variant

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES Corp. started introducing a sporty addition to its Vios line-up at the start of this month. The new Vios S is available in 1.5-liter fuel-efficient VVTi engine.

Exclusive sporty features for this grade include HID headlamps, 15" alloy wheels, rear spoiler and a special "S" badge.

The Vios S is offered at P800,000 for the automatic transmission unit P779,000 for the manual transmission, and is available in youthful shades of chromadyne black and blaze.

"The Vios is the country's [illegible] best-selling vehicle with average sales of 900 units per month and is proudly made in Toyota's Sta. Rosa manufacturing plant. Following the success of our limited edition 250th anniversary Vios model, the addition of this sporty variant is aimed to strengthen Toyota's lead in the passenger car segment, targeting younger customers who are looking for an edgier character in their vehicle or an affordable price with optimum fuel economy," said Raymund Rodrigues, TMPC's first vice president for vehicle sales.

SWIFT

Suzuki Swift: small, sensible and swift

THE ECONOMIC CRUNCH... and six rallies ending that gets tighter and tighter by the day—it sure is fun to stay to buy small cars.

However, those cars don't have the pep that can hang with bigger displacement units in the highway nor handling that can rival Jaime Bevid Rally Championship homologated cars, nor have the ability to stow people and cargo in comfort. This is where the Suzuki Swift answers all these needs, and more.

Front pillars hidden under wide wrap-around beveled glass give it a relatively upright angle. Pronounced front-side fenderlines, a prominent grille, a flat roof and a tri-spoke 16-inch rim and tire package gives this car a more aggressive stance.

Cabin

The cabin has the ability to breate from to a relaxed mode, and a high ceiling creates the feeling of extra space. All seats are supportive enough to provide comfort to the lower back, and all buttons, dials and levers were designed in the million-yen touch.

A three-cluster instrument gauge binnacle has large fonts for quick reference with regard to engine speed, speed, coolant, fuel and engine temperature, cool amber backlighting that is pleasing to view, and is fashionable with the "cool" position of its orbicle for a dose of sportiness.

Start the motor and the peppy 1.5-liter, DOHC, naturally aspirated inline four cylinder—with Suzuki's Tuber Thinking for a better balance between power and fuel efficiency—springs to life quickly. Keeping engine temperature low and providing a constant fresh charge of cold air to the engine block is a unique plastic intake manifold.

A slight tap on the gas pedal delivers sprightly acceleration, a crank peak of the 1.5l Boosts and 145 Nm of roaring horse that the Swift can deliver at full throttle.

Strongest link

The strongest link of the Swift is its FWC (with it is its handling ability and it shows when you take this car onto the twisties. Front and rear rounds of 1.47g max and 1.40 max, respectively, a Macpherson strut setup at the front and a torsion bar setup at the rear make for smooth transition from corner entry to exit and provide a comfortable ride as well.

The Swift may be swift on the straights and turns, but can also feel speed and show safety assurance. It is that sure-footed car that can combine performance and passenger comfort with ease of the compromises.

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IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

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Promo period: 6 from July 7 to August 31, 2009

STEP into the sporty, elegant E350 cockpit.

THE 3.0-LITRE V6, 24-valve 231 bhp engine

The quintessential Mercedes-Benz: a pictorial

IN THE CABIN padded mat piping enhances the feeling of comfort and well-being.

THE AEAS suction features classic Mercedes horizontal and LED taillights.

AMONG ALL THE MERCEDES-BENZ MODels offered in Manila ranging from sedans to coupés to SUVs, off-roaders, roadsters and even luxury vehicles, the quintessence of the Stuttgart-based premium brand is captured by the E-Class. With dimensions and a price tag midway between the C-Class and the top-end S-Class, **the E-Class is regarded as the most perfect** embodiment of Mercedes-Benz's core values of safety, comfort and design. No wonder it is the best-selling vehicle in its market segment in Germany and many other European countries.

The E-Class evolved over six decades from the 136 series, the first passenger car built (way back in 1947 around by Mercedes-Benz after World War II. It evolved into the 120 and 121, 170, 115 and 114, 123, 124, 210 and 211 series from 1953 to 2002-2008. For 2009, the E-Class, a.k.a. the 212 series or ninth generation, has been completely redesigned but only to further improve safety and long-distance comfort, but also to enhance individuality, quality and environmental compatibility.

When I had an obsidian black 2009 E-Class Avantgarde for some days, several friends asked me how it felt like driving it.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

"It's like heaven to drive," I always replied, for the E350's all-new chassis has been improved with adaptive shock absorbers, dynamic damping characteristics and padded seat piping (additional transversely contoured foam filling under the leather upholstery). Its speed is sensitive (for safety), precise and quality materials of the car's interior that contribute to the feeling of comfort, serenity and well-being, as these are considered in the E-Class.

Undoubtedly the assurance that you're in a car equipped with 70 sensors and state-of-the-art safety technologies is the foundation for comfort and tranquility. The protective occupant protection Pre-Safe system including seven airbags and automatic emergency braking when an accident is imminent, Neck-Pro headrests, drowsiness detection system, increased body torsional rigidity and front-end deformation zone with active bonnet for pedestrian protection are all standard safety features in the E-Class.

Safety and comfort combined with a powerful yet fuel-efficient engine make the E350 a winner in its market segment. The 3.0-liter, 24-valve, V6 direct-injection gasoline engine delivers 231 bhp and 300 Nm max torque, hits 100 kph in 7.3 seconds, has a drag coefficient of 0.26 Cd and a top speed of 240 kph, yet averages only 6.1/8.7 liters per 100 km in city and highway driving. The 86 is mated to a 7-speed automatic transmission and steering-wheel mounted selector levers. Ecotronically compatible, all E-Class engines meet the EU4 emission standard. The sporty yet elegant cockpit, Intelligent Light System bi-xenon headlamps, lowered suspension and 17-inch alloy wheels strongly suggest the agility of the E350.

Like my Mercedes, the E-Class effortlessly exudes status and superior grace, but since a picture is worth a thousand words, let these photos speak for it.

* * *

The name of PIA president Max Alvarez was misspelled in my column last week. I apologize for the error.

Editor Thelma Bisnar San Juan Contributing Editor Lia S. Bernardo

LIFESTYLE Home&Entertaining

Philippine home designs a hit in Tokyo

HOME LIFESTYLE DESIGNS by Filipino designers have just won acclaim in Tokyo. This follows the recognition they have received the past decade in New York, Milan, Paris, since the Movement 8—now an iconic design brand known globally—blazed the trail in the '90s. Ilhadji Leyag, Bernardo Cobangbang, Tor Pascua, Tony Rodriguez, Ann Pamintuan, Milo Nawal, Luisa Robleston and former Citem head, the late Ely Pama, be-

PHILIPPINE HOME C2

Cebu exporters had been active some years back, but eventually lost out to China and Vietnam

Wood and rattan furniture in Spain—but no Filipino pieces

Text and photos by Bibo M. Carballo
Columnist

IF NEW YORK HAS SOHO'S PEARCE the Gabriele Lafayette, the UK Harrod's and the Philippines SM Department store, Spain has El Corte Inglés as its largest department store complex.

Every little city we traveled to from north to south of Spain as a city-wide holiday had its branch of El Corte.

Its origin, like our SM, was similarly modest. Founder Ramon Areces bought a tailoring shop in 1934 that had been in existence since 1890 at Calle Preciados in central Madrid. In 1940, he named it into the corporation El Corte Inglés.

For a while it had competition from Galerias Preciados, also on the same street. After his death, his successor nephew, Isidoro Alvarez, bought out the Galerias in 1995, and El Corte became the largest repository of products and services.

The chain are siblings, with products ranging from food, wines, shoes, to household goods, electronics, drinks and foodstuff.

In Madrid flagship store encompasses several buildings on Hilarondo Street but still with the original Corte Preciados.

Wandering through the Madrid store one day we were attracted to a newly installed furniture exhibit. The store was preparing for summer (August-September) and what caught our attention was the various furniture for indoor and outdoor settings, with wood and rattan as the main components.

Some used local cotton and twine. It was clear that the Oriental penchant for wood continues to exist in Europeans.

We searched through the pieces and found only a couple of baskets with a tag of "Made in Vietnam." We felt it was impossible that there were no pieces from the Philippines. We learned later that Cebu exporters had been active some years back, but eventually lost out to China and Vietnam, especially to the broad market.

We felt sad about this, well aware that 80-90 percent of furniture exports came from Cebu. Now products have even added more indigenous materials like sea grass, abaca, hemp or coconut husk, leaves and more.

Cebu furniture makers have now apparently turned their attention to South Africa and its growing economy. Some recently joined a trade mission to Johannesburg and Cape Town—and noting those furniture here.

E-mail the author at bibocarballo@yahoo.com.

Megaworld launches third phase of Manhattan Garden City

Leading property developer Megaworld Corporation has launched the third phase of one of its trendsetting township projects, Manhattan Garden City.

Dubbed Manhattan Heights, the new phase will feature an additional four towers. Manhattan Heights will add more than 1,600 units to Manhattan Garden City. The first tower will have 496 residential units, all feature flat-to-mes. Unit prices start at P2.5 million for a studio, P3.7M for a 1-bedroom, and P6.1M for a 2-bedroom suite.

Manhattan Heights will be located across Ali Mall, where a transport terminal is now located. The site along Gen. Romulo Ave. gives residents easy access to Aurora Boulevard and EDSA via P. Tuazon Boulevard.

With Manhattan Heights' connection to the other parts of Manhattan Garden City through garden walkways and footpaths, residents will enjoy unprecedented mobility. All they need to do is board the LRT2 and MRT3, which soon-to-be-built at the Araneta Center, to reach any point of the metro within minutes.

MANHATTAN Heights is the new phase of the bestselling Manhattan Garden City project of Megaworld in Araneta Center

To maintain Manhattan Garden City's claim as to having the most number of amenities, the country's #1 residential condominium developer is planning more than 20 new amenities for Manhattan Heights. These boost the previously announced high concentration of amenities in Manhattan Garden City's first two phases.

Passive amenities at Manhattan Heights include skylights, sitting areas and garden decks. Active amenities also abound, such as a jogging path, adult and kiddie pools and a playground.

A sky garden at the four topmost floors of each tower differentiates Manhattan Heights among the modern buildings within Araneta Center. While being an aesthetic feature, the sky garden also has the environment for its blueprint.

The green rooftop development concept employed at the fourth floor podium deck is aimed at lowering the levels of pollution, while the sky gardens plant life also cleanses the air and reduces heat stress, high decibel the metro.

To know more about Manhattan Heights, please call 910-3333 or check out the Manhattan Garden City showroom at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall. Or visit www.themanhattangarden-city.com.

THE environment-friendly sky garden is a unique feature of each residential tower at Manhattan Heights.

he home designs a hit in Tokyo

DEMEX Rattancraft (left) and Coalwell, which received a Good Design Award in Japan

During the show, a hotel buyer bought the entire setup of Jensen Furniture's, while a spa in Japan bought Lucio's swing chair and bed.

Interior Lifestyle is the leading design-oriented trade fair for the Japanese interior market. Among the hot trends in the show had to do with the kitchen, tableware, pottery and tool boxware. Also noticeable was the demand for gadgets, tools and men's essentials such as bags.

To see more of the Philippine participants at Interior Lifestyle Japan and more Philippine designs, visit Manila FAME International Oct. 13-18 at the SMX Convention Center and World Trade Center Manila.

or environmental-friendly products," said Vesare Vitay of Alice Blue Candle, manufacturer of canvas candles.

The positive response to Philippine design was evident in the significant inquiries for the store's Board Bags of BC Vitamins, fountains of TBC Classic, lamps and tabletops of Lightworks, and interiors and desk accessories of Coalwell Inc.

g made easier

BOOKSHELF covers a wall in the living room. It contains the family's rare collection, from fiction, history to biography and art.

THE LIVING room opens onto a partly shaded patio where Virata likes to lounge and work in the mornings. Her potted plants and bamboo trees separating the patio from the swimming pool keep the space fresh and cool.

Just the right home style for Joy Virata

Or how she's handling the run-up to 'The Fantasticks'—serenely

IT WAS ALL THEATER TALK one afternoon when unemployed actor and playwright Jay Peras of Repertory Philippines invited some people over for tea at the Virata home at One Serendra, a community of homes made up of clusters of low-rise luxury condominiums set in a garden oasis.

Virata is managing the Rep's production of "The Fantasticks," a 1960s off-Broadway musical by Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones which went on to become the longest running musical in the world. ("The Fantasticks" is running July 3-26 at Onstage, theater, Greenhill 2 and is directed by Pedy Bautista).

A year after moving into One Serendra, the Virata family is more than settled in. They have found the home they've always wanted right in the middle of the city and yet far removed from the hustle.

Virata is already known as Pic Chinese restaurant as "Mr. Take-out." Her husband Gino loves eating out and takes advantage of having a circle of restaurants as neighbors.

His grandson Diego, said to be a chef, likes to spend school holidays and leisure time in the kitchen perfecting his DOSCs—Diego's custard sticky cookies, as Virata fondly calls them. He has moved on to make chocolate chip cookies as well. Her best ones Virata ratsies the best ever had, and sells batches of baked for extra cash.

To think she had originally bought the One Serendra unit as an investment. Luckily enough, her grandchildren overturned her to make it their home when they saw there was a swimming pool of a country club proportions just a few steps from the patio.

Virata likes to go swimming herself when she can spare some time. Her unit is on the ground level, at the edge of a beautiful landscape which opens up into the pool.

"I love flowers but I have a brown thumb," she said. "Now, I have a beautiful garden out back and I didn't have to do anything."

Mixed sounds

She spends her mornings out on the patio, working, answering her faxes and doing her work to the mixed sounds of children playing by the pool or with their overdoction of classical music playing in the background. Her office holds meetings at home as well.

Rep marketing director Rem Zamora burst in through the gate, beaming to get to the Internet. "Use the wifi," Virata offered, as her aide is synergistically zone one of the many commercial zones with wifi access within the development.

Afternoon rain pours. Virata and her guests decided to move to the patio. It is her "office" after all. She spends most time out there working than in the study.

"It's my favorite place in the whole house," she said.

Julia Abueva, young lead star of "The Fantasticks" who has never been to Virata's home before, was amazed at her place.

"It's like stepping into condo or world," she said, as she explored the lush garden area beyond Virata's patio.

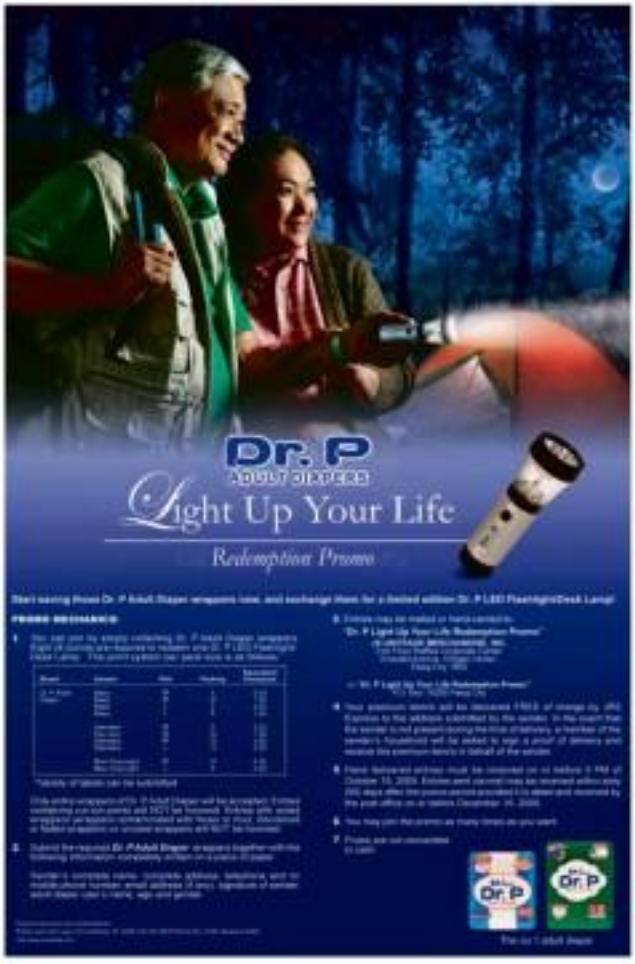
VIRATA and grandson Diego enjoy the late afternoon sunshine at the patio.

Virata finds life more simple and relaxing since making One Serendra her home. She feels more centered, and literally is at the center of everything. Only minutes away the pool is right out back if she feels like swimming and the gym is at most a two-minute walk from the patio, groceries are across the street at Market! Market!, but family's favorite restaurants are quite near by seven close and their favorite shops are at Bonifacio High Street.

"I like it, it's my style," she said.

One Serendra is part of the double land Premier project in Metro Manila's newest and most vibrant central business district, Bonifacio Global City.

For properties on the East Tower of One Serendra, call 8405000 or visit www.megaworldpremier.com. Model units are available for viewing at the Serendra Sales Pavilion on 28th St., Bonifacio Global City. From ₱



NOW CAVORA (left), Virata (center) and Julia Abueva (right) relive details of her production over afternoon tea.

MASTER'S bedroom

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2009
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE Parenting

How to travel comfortably with baby in tow

By Margarita T. Locsin-Chan
Contributor

AT JUST 14 MONTHS, MY son is already a frequent flyer, with more than 100 hours in flight across three continents.

I have flown alone and with my husband, on business and economy, with a stroller or pushchair and without either. What follows are some of my recommendations for seniors, parents and guardians who will dare travel with a baby or toddler before the age when you can plop them in a seat and leave them to in-flight cartoons and video games.

Do your research

All airports follow certain international regulations, but some have customized them to suit individual situations, and this means knowing what to obey where it's different.

My first flight was out of Heathrow, which recently loosened its policy on hand baggage thanks to public outcry. (I mean, how many people really put everything in one bag?). But it remains extremely vigilant because of our giant threats.

Heathrow's website stated both liquid and powdered baby formula were allowed, but then there was a likelihood I'd be asked to taste the former. Thinking it would be easier to bring liquid formula (ready-to-drink formula is available in newspaks and bottles in the UK), I packed eight boxes in my baby bag, along with the same number of bottles.

> My son crawled up to First Class and demanded an upgrade —which did not thrill the passengers

Much to my dismay, the Customs officer made me open every single pack and taste it, despite my showing her the notice on the pack. Once said seals opened, the formula would have to be consumed within an hour (and we had a 30-hour flight ahead of us!).

Having learned my lesson, I now carry one bottle of pre-made formula for pre-departure (I still had to taste it, but at least my son would have drunk it all before take off) and a stash of powdered formula.

Distilled water is always available in airports, and the plane's water did not make my son sick when we filled up en route. I also add 1-2 more feeds than necessary because as I found out, my son doesn't have much of an appetite for solids in flight, but is absolutely voracious for his formula.

Call the airline

Clarify with the airline what amenities and facilities they have for children. All airlines claim to be baby-friendly, but in truth, only some truly consider babies' needs.

All the crazy we've ridden—Emirates, Etihad and Cathay Pacific—carry baby formula on board and on all classes, but frankly, Emirates was the only one who had a special kit for babies. There was no more pesky plastic and contained a bib, teether, spoon, a pack of wet wipes, a small bottle of baby lotion and a large tissue to cover the baby changer with.

I've ridden Emirates business and economy with my son and on both classes, we were given the pack.

To my surprise, my recent trip with Cathay Pacific was a bit disappointing, especially since I expected so much after searching its newest advertisements about unparalleled customer service. I'm my longhaul from London, the staff only told me when I was onboard that bassinets weren't available on business and they had no bit to speak of.

My travel agent booked the bassinet months before and was not informed of its unavailability, so I was, of course, severely

HOW TO GO

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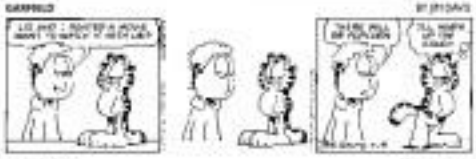
GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS



A. LIPIN BY ED ASHEIN

FUSAKO BANDIT BY PH. JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

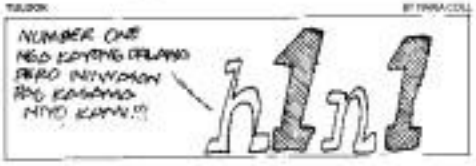
LOVEBYTES BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PAULINA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

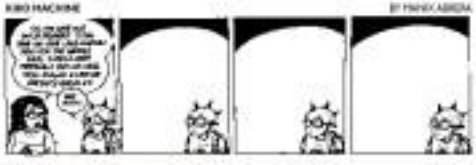
TULDOK BY TINNA COLL



BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

ATOMO AND WEBOT BY LYN GARCELLANO

KIKO MACHINE BY FRANK ABREGA



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS CRAVE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dan Heuft

	2	3			1	9	8	6
6			3					5
4			5					7
2			1			9		
	8	5				4		
9			2			6		
1			8			2		
8			6		9			
	9	6			4			

Difficulty Level: ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	2	7	8	5	3	1	4	9
5	9	3	4	6	1	2	8	7
4	1	8	9	2	7	5	3	6
9	3	2	5	7	6	4	8	1
8	5	6	2	1	4	3	7	9
7	4	1	6	3	9	8	2	5
3	6	5	7	9	2	8	1	4
2	7	9	1	4	8	5	6	3
1	8	4	3	8	5	7	9	2

How to travel comfortably with baby in tow

From page D1

soothing during the whole flight. Thankfully, my son slept the easier way in Hong Kong, so I didn't need their concessions kit and only changed him when we got to the airport (hooray for Pampers 12-hour diapers!).

What really annoyed me was that during the Hong Kong-Manila leg, which most of us Filipinos equate to a drive from Makati to Tagaytay, they gave me a large maintainer bag (with the Cathay Pacific logo) with some nappies and baby food.

I was stunned. First, thanks for remembering I had a baby with me 14 hours later. Second, it was the most inconvenient thing to lug around the airport considering I was already armed with my baby, his stroller, a huge baby bag and my handbag. Third, talk about terrible packaging. Considering how much their tickets are, you'd think they would have packaged their baby kit better!

Regarding space, I think the A380 is the most comfortable economy class for parents with kids. On our London-Sydney flight, which totals more than 24 hours, my one-digit comfortably sat on my lap and I had enough leg room to update during meals and move around so my leg wouldn't "die."

The new plans also houses of more suites, some of which are big enough to change a baby comfortably (as opposed to the regular ones that barely take super models).

Book baby-friendly seats

The only problem with new planes is that...it loses an infant. first class is located directly above economy. specifically the seats allocated to parents with babies. This is (for when babies can't crawl, but on our Sydney flight, we had a boil-downs poor-old babies all learning to crawl, walk and talk.

Because the area near the toilets was spacious, we moms decided to form a little playgroup. My son crawled up to first class and demanded an upgrade—which did not thrill the passengers. Let me tell you, a velour cord may stop an adult from entering further, but it is completely useless against exploring toddlers.

Cathay Pacific's business-class seats fit me and my son comfortably and the angle made it easier for me to keep him under my control and away from other passengers.

Rifkin's couple pods (request for the middle seats) are perfect with babies because they're contained yet roomy, and my son loved climbing from me to my husband and back.

Airlines should seriously consider making car-seat type attachments for babies because bassinets are weight limited and even small clothes can easily jump out of them, for one thing). Furthermore, babies love to sleep in car seats, so having these would make it easier to put babies to sleep and keep other passengers happy.

I, for one, would pay for an additional economy seat if it would make my son sleep well and keep him happy, particularly during long-haul flights.

Pack smart

I packed differently for my flight with my husband and my flight alone. With hubby, I could afford to bring extra things because I had a big, strong partner with me. But on my most recent flight, I had to really consider how much space I had and it was really not much at all.

I bought a big baby bag from Mamas and Papas that didn't have a lot of pockets, but did have a lot of "open" space in it. I loaded six 12-hour Pampers nappies, six bottles, a six-level stack of formula, three baby spoons, a pack of baby wipes and a changing mat.

Out went the extra clothes, comforters, toys—and I had to pray double time to ask God not to let my son vomit or soft poo on himself (his old self-ber...proper marker).

I put all my documentation inside a messenger bag, which I never liked using before, but which I now think is the world's greatest invention for moms.

I also bought an umbrella-type stroller for GBP25 (just over P2,000, would you believe?) at Tesco, a British supermarket chain. Billed best my Maclaren, during my last long-haul from Manila (I don't blame them. I'm quite sure someone stole it), so this time, I brought something I didn't mind losing.

To my surprise, my little red Tesco stroller worked perfectly. It was light, easy to open and close with one hand, and looked so cheap—no one bothered to take it. I hope it will stay alive for my trip back, but in any case, it was a good buy!

Another mommy must-have is a Blackberry or one of the new netbooks. I used to bring my laptop everywhere, but this is virtually impossible with a baby in tow.

With either of the two, we can keep in touch with our anxious buddies and the excited grandparents while waiting for our connecting flight or when baby is asleep. My new Eee PC 1000HE's battery lasts for a minimum of five hours, so I can just charge it before I leave, use it during my trip, and just recharge when I've reached my destination.

Schedule flights around baby's schedule

Finally, schedule your flights with your baby's schedule in mind.

Whenever possible, try to fly when your baby is usually asleep so that he just sleeps throughout. I did this during my last flight and for the first time, I actually got to eat all my meals comfortably (even with my one right eye) to myself.

When we flew during my son's "awake" time, it was impossible to keep him in our seats, much less keep him quiet!

John Robert Powers presents 'Journey of Fame'

AT THE GARDEN BALLROOM OF BGSC Plaza, 100 students of John Robert Powers competed in "Journey of Fame." The event was sponsored by Trillo Restaurant, Fashion Designers Alliance Manila, AMD, Queen Kids, Artella Agoncillo, International Model Focus (Bembible Nine Sun), Philippine Teachers College, Federick Lord Cole/Black Orchid, World Bangkok Haute Dog and Glenrose's World International. Call 8920551 or text 0917-5353099.

Brown Movement seminar

As part of Brown Movement for Cultural Advancement, Inc.'s efforts to involve the youth in its advocacy to preserve, promote and enhance the appreciation of the Filipino cheerleader, a core group is being formed. Children from ages 10-17 are invited to join Brown Movement in Kilusang Kabuhayanggit and be part of the youth group which will undergo a free seminar-training on July 26, Aug. 2 and 8 at the offices of Brown Movement at Whetron Tower, 153 Legaspi Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Call 0918-5448 or 8160925; e-mail philbrownmovement@yahoo.com.

Trash to cash

Heaps of waste materials are brought to the SM Southmall Recycling Market every first Saturday and Sunday of the month. Selling waste materials is done by SM tenants, customers and the people from neighboring communities and buying is done by recycling companies. Materials usually traded are scrap paper, carton, plastic items, old computers, old appliances and old batteries. Other SM Malls have their own schedule for this recycling market. This activity is part of SM's advocacy for environment upkeep.

Sun Shop at SM North

The Sun Shop SM City North Edsa recently transferred to its new location at Level 4, Uptown mall, New Annex Building. The Sun Shop offers prepaid SIM packs, call cards, and accessories products/applications and accessories. It also offers the Sun Prepaid Retailer Kit, a business starter set for those who want to sell Sun Cellular's prepaid products and earn extra income by being a retailer. Call 9008000 or e-mail thesunshop@digital.ph.

Electrolux campaign

Electrolux Philippines, which celebrates its 80th anniversary this year, will donate P80 to Gantay Kalikasan for every washer purchased during its "Celebrity Washer Campaign" in addition to providing discounts to consumers. The campaign, ongoing until Aug. 31, will support Gantay Kalikasan. Call 840-2463 (2273) or 1-800-10-845-CARE. Visit www.electrolux.com.ph.

THE CLAN: Dale Reese, Sen. Mar Roxas, Korina Sanchez, Nene Arranza and Eddie Balagtas (seated) Stella Marquez Arranza, Baby Arranza Forte, Judy Arranza, Ruby Reese, Larry Balagtas and Rosa Reese

THE ROXASES cover the Sandoseos.

Pepito Albert to do Korina's gown—retro Filipiniana

WE STILL DON'T GET THE WEDding date of Mar Roxas and Korina Sanchez and where it will take place, pulongpo. But it's the country's reserved senator, the multifaceted, talented and artistic Pepito Albert who will do the wedding gown.

The wedding's theme will definitely be '60s to '70s retro Filipiniana.

The entourage will be done by Fabian Hattori Ohta, while the wedding coordinators are the in-demand Brokenradio Inc., headed by Mariebelle Lignos and Rachel Chiwaret, done by the genius Cesar Gaspar and flowers by Margarita Ivanovic Sosa.

We have all read and seen the engagement party of Sen. Mar Roxas and Korina Sanchez, lovers of the year.

What many not known was there was another portmanteau/token.

It happened on June 7 at Korina's home in Merville Park, Muntinlupa City.

(Because of the secrecy [illegible], it was postponed earlier for "the nuts and mom were not visible," as Korina put it).

"This is where my mom and dad's dreams came true. In this humble house," said Korina. "My mom built it with special events like this in mind. They would be truly smiling down from heaven if I held it here in the house I grew up in."

That's entire family, both from the Arranzas and Roxas clans, including Stella Arranza and Rosa Reese, were in Korina's home late in the afternoon. In the presence of Korina's three brothers and some relatives, Mar asked her to marry him.

"This is it!" gushed the senator from the island of Panay. "Well, we're in love," said Korina, "and there's no stopping that."

Malou Dans Rubacon showcased a traditional pamanhikan, complete with dance, song and helicopters while Mar served. Indeed Korina. A group of singers performed a Tagalog Sinhuman song titled "Kahapon, Ngayon at Bukas, Iyong-Iyo Ako."

"Yesterday, today and tomorrow, I am for you, forever" is Korina's statement to Mar when they exchanged their engagement rings.

In the evening, Korina's family and close pals from high school and college had dinner while watching the "Pinoy Ako" video clips.

SISTERS Margarita Forte and Rhodora E Lagarde

DAING Cecilia Palanca and Honey Boy Palanca

HALO-DJ and Oye Forte

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **NIKON** Photo Solutions

WELCOMING guests at The Joy of Wellness Fair were Mead Philippines president and CEO Narelle Nordstrom and Mead JVP Fritz Van Dyk with his charming wife Jong

END OF SEASON
SALE
July 15- Aug.2
Up to 70% off!*
CROSSINGS
Fashion + Home
Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Quezon Ave
The Rams Podium, The Ramp

Okay, people, get your body moving and let's go heading off holo!

DJ A-Trak rocks Embassy

The popular MTV Magazine featured in one of its issues that it's "no longer a crime to mash a hip-hop a cappella into a techno track. In this sense, A-Trak, aka Alain Macklovitch, leads the pack. The 23-year-old Montreal native rides the line between hip-hop and electronic beats in a refreshing hybrid of every thing "not-shitting."

Very few DJs make a big jump from club sets to high profile festival performances and Kanye West's large-than-life stadium shows with ease; pulongpo. In today's night club-hing DJ culture, A-Trak definitely holds a key to unique place. In a matter of months, his signature moniker name gaining support from his namesake republics like Busy P, DJ AM, Armin Van Buuren, MSTRKRFT and Steve Aoki.

Not bad for a kid who many viewed as a "two turntables prodigy."

After tons of awards, A-Trak even became a streetwear culture icon, collaborating with New Era, Klobrille, Etc. York and penny mash every dialogue worth his salt. So, Alain or A-Trak has become bigger than anyone could have ever imagined, pulongpo.

And as usual, Bacardi brought DJ A-Trak together with Manila Massive at the forever packed Embassy super club, where every table had a Bacardi Superior and Cuba Libres as party house of the night. No wonder DJ A-Trak rocked our town to the point that not the crowds happily wanting home, pulongpo.

True Value's newly renovated store in Alabang

The place to really get value for your money is definitely True Value; pulongpo, where not was invited to their ultra-modern renovated Alabang Town Center branch. We missed the sun-day "In The Bag" before the formal opening where there were great discounts and super good buys.

The launching rites were graced by Jose Arlan Ramos, True Value Company International department territory manager; Cliff Belmont, True Value Company paint specialist; True Value business partner Zenaida Reichert, president; Zenaida Marketing; and Nylah Rizza Bautista, Alabang Town Center deputy general manager.

According to True Value's Jose-John Ramos, "The store actually has a lifestyle concept and is a haven for do-it-yourself (DIY) enthusiasts who just love transforming their homes and improving their surroundings. They'll be rewarded for their patronage through True Perks program. Isn't that wonderful?"

No truer words were ever said, pulongpo. And whatever you need, True Value has it. Best of all, it won't drain your wallet.

True Value's other branches are located at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Ortigas Square 1, Market, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Ayala Center, Cebu, and soon at the Ayala Mall in Angeles, Pampanga, Ashlings.

MAR Cua with Desiree Dee, OP Reyes, Ivan Zaldarriaga and Joe Herrera

Mile promotes wellness

We all know that "health is wealth." So it was a blessing that Milo promoted wellness through sports in The Joy of Wellness Fair, organized by Mondel Philippines to build champions in sports and in life, at the SM Megamall, dahlings.

Gracing the affair were Milo champs and sports icons Chris Tiu and Asgay Lizardo who participated in exciting activities that drew huge crowds at the Milo booth.

It was as much fun, pulongpo, when ran into basketball stars, would you believe, had a blast dribbling our basketball skills against Chris in a free throw. "I strongly encourage parents to get their kids out sports on just to come to health, but also for character building," says Chris. Mike champ Asgay on the other hand, showed everyone how to prepare the Champion Mix known as "the perfect Milo drink."

There we were treated to an exhibition that featured the fantastic students of the Association for the Advancement of Kinesiola led by their senior instructor Chino Singalilan. Milo Best Center founder Nic Jorge gave a short talk on sports. Sent was the insightful insight about the National Milo Marathon, which has become the country's longest and most prestigious running event. "Living physical activity is not enough. The bottom line, pulongpo, is eating the right food. Now you know why a fine nutrition connecting was also offered tons, dahlings.

"To further promote wellness through sports, we fostered the Milo Champ Camp, a school year started this month which advocates building champions in sports and in life through healthy living," said the happy Mondel SVP communications director, cyber whiz Sandra Puno, pulongpo.

UNVEILING the renovated True Value Store, Willy Co, president, True Serve Hardware Phils.; Jun Julio Gomez, territory manager, Int'l. Dept. True Value Company; Cliff Belmont, True Value paint specialist, True Value Company; Zenaida Reichert, president, Zenaida Marketing; and Nylah Rizza Bautista, ATC deputy general manager, Ayala Malls Group

Editor Ermie G. Rebarde

ENTERTAINMENT

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TESSIE Tomas (right) and Iza Calzado in "Sanglaan"

Tessie: Pawnshop life tough

By Marinel R. Cruz

COMEDIENNE TESSIE TOMAS, WHO plays the role of a pawnshop owner in the Cinemalaya film entry "Sanglaan," says she's thankful she never had to trade any of her jewelry for money.

"I have jewelry I'm grateful that I never had to resort to pawning any of them. But I've always been curious about this kind of business. I even wanted to go to a robotic institution," Tessie tells Inquirer Entertainment.

In "Sanglaan," by first-time full-length director Mito Sogueco, Tessie plays Olivia, a religious businesswoman whose pawnshop is in danger of closing down.

The actress says she finds the script, by Sogueco and Gay Ace Domingo, very meditative. "It reflects the present in our country. It shows how most Filipinos struggle to make ends meet," she explains.

This is Tessie's eighth indie movie since 2008. She was last seen in Mike Alvarado's "Padre de Familya" as a corrupt town mayor.

Tessie describes Sogueco as "somebody who knows what he wants and how to achieve it. He's consistent with his statements, probably because he helped write the script." Sogueco and Domingo co-wrote "Sanglaan" with Joelle Gonzales and Jessie Lavina.

Tessie worked on the film for six days. "Seventy percent of my scenes are in a

TESSIE 11

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1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
3 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
4 THE HAUNTED
5 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
6 ICE AGE 3: (DIGITAL 3D)
7 BENTE
8 indieBoss: BRUTUS
9 VILLA ESTRELLA
10 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

ERMITA

1 THE HAUNTED
2 TRANSFORMERS 2 | ICE AGE 3
3 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
4 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
5 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
6 VILLA ESTRELLA
7 BENTE I PITIK BULAG

METRO EAST

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
4 THE HAUNTED
5 VILLA ESTRELLA
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
7 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
8 BENTE

NOVALICHES

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 VILLA ESTRELLA
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE

PIONEER

1 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
2 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 THE HAUNTED

STA. ROSA

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

LIPA

1 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
4 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS

DASMARINAS

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 IP MAN
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

IMUS

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

STARMILLS

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 VILLA ESTRELLA
3 THE COFFIN
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
5 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
6 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE

ANGELES

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

TACLOBAN

1 ICE AGE 3: Dawn Of The Dinosaurs
2 DRAG ME TO HELL
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

BACOLOD

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 REVOLUTIONARY ROAD
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 FROM WITHIN
5 VILLA ESTRELLA
6 THE PERFUME

ILOILO

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
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Opening This Week

BONNIE Clyde in "Bratas"

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

Stars: Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, Jim Broadbent, Maggie Smith; directed by David Yates

In the series' sixth installment, Hogwarts is threatened not only by Voldemort but also by teen love. Aided by Dumbledore (Broadbent), Harry (Radcliffe) seeks to unravel the enemy's past and find his weakness. Todd McCarthy of Variety hails it as "dazzlingly well-made and effective." Agnes Kirk Hunnicutt of The Hollywood Reporter "leaky story ... gives way to vigorous storytelling." Fernando Baligod of Boom Entertainment says it's "darker, more dilutware ... there's almost a personal perspective."

Brutus, Ang Paglalakbay

Stars: Sid Lucero, Ronnie Lazaro, Khen Medina, Timothy Mabalot; directed by Tara Illenberger

Two Mangyan kids (Medina, Mabalot) agree to transport bones for Chopd hog guess—embedding on a journey of self-discovery through the Mindoro forest. The Special Jury Prize winner in last year's Cinemalaya, this digital film also won awards in Brussels and Hawaii fests. Like Zalueta of the Inquirer says that it's "notable for [its] scale, energy and mordancy," adding that it's "well-photographed ... and ... well-edited." Par-lovers: 1:30 Robinsons Galleria Indie Zone.

POWER PLANT CINEMA

G.I. JOE'S - UP 1:00, 3:30, 6:20, 7:50, 9:40	3:30 AGE'S - UP 1:50, 4:10, 6:10, 8:20	TRANSFORMERS: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN - PG13 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE - UP 1:10, 3:50, 6:10, 8:50	TRANSFORMERS: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN - PG13 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:30	HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE - UP 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:30

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Jessie: Pawnshop ...

From page E1

surgeon would when it's very busted. It sure really tough," she says. "The set furniture (David, Tessie) is also very crowded and to-do ..."

Claustrophobic

"Sanglaan" also tells the story of Ando (Jiro Felipe), the jewelry appraiser who is forgotten by his lover-wife's high school crush, Renee (Ara Evaldez) is the pawnshop's security guard who fulfill all video cam of his ailing wife (Flor Salazar, Sheryl Dela Rosa) to the loan shark who won't take "No" for an answer. David (Jason Roces) is a scammer looking for an opportunity to make money in the pawnshop.

In real life, Sequeira confesses actually ran a pawnshop for 10 years. "This exposed me to the customers of the sanglaan. When they come to me with a concept for a movie, I readily filled in all the gaps," says Sequeira. "When we went into production, it was then that I realized why nobody has done a movie about it."

Sequeira continues: "Realizing really happens inside a pawnshop. It's claustrophobic. It's like living behind bars. After you move left the pawnshop, she said she felt so free. That's how the viewers will feel after watching the movie. It will liberate them from pain, from their past."

"Sanglaan" is one of 10 full-length films featured in the 5th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Films Festival from July 17-26 at the National Center of the Philippines.

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

THEATRE MALL

PROMENADE

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Pretty starlet ...

From page E1

"Bahlang Ilyal" segment of ABS-CBN's TV Patrol, was given his own channel by journalists.

The Valenzuela City government handout the Award to current or previous candidates who have excelled in government service, community service, education, entrance and broadcast, journalism, business, sports, and the visual and performing arts.

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's gabfests on TV (And why we can't control, if we are myself.):

► Regine Velasquez, on wedding plans with Ogie Alcasid: mind the upcoming movie logic of Michelle van Eimeren and Mike Mozart.

"Sabad ng bahay walang pera. Hindi ng nga 9 years old, nagga-pretend ng ang labor na husband. Gaanon ako ako." (Ha? Bitter years old ngabalot pa kami nun, para hindi kami'd mahalan.)

► Aubrey Miles, on preparing to pass for a mom's magazine cover:

"Tatanggang dapat ay parang ang ginawa ko sa gym para dito sa cover na ito." (Excited ng ano'ng Tarp.)

► Heather Bautista, on pitching up Bb. Intramuros with Isabel Oli:

"Hindi kasi ako pinalde na dun. Kung sana yung Intramuralmuch Ay, pero lang ako. Mongga'y hindi pa nasa Isabel ako nun okay 4 ako, hindi pa pasi sa akin. Magbal-a-pero kami kung kami malaki magbago kami, nagmahirap pa kami para di lang ok."

► Isabel Oli's reaction:

"Siguro sa time magiging maayos din ang lahat kasi ang dami ko nako-convinced na sumali. Pitong Intramuros lang yung dinedebate."

► EC Concepcion, admitting Hoda Perland is crushing her:

"Hiyan kung ano ang sabi ng mga tao sa akin. Pero ang hindi nga nagsasabi di. Mga taga-college sa kabar. Matino kasi ito nung nasaga: "Hiwa-mahe?"

► Lisa Raz, asked how she can prove to Paolo Contis' mother that she deserves to be her son's partner:

"First of all, how can I prove it to her, lived for six days more now? Actually, we've worked things out with her and with his family. Everything's going great. Siyempre ang mahihirap di mo kailan, respect." (Sorry Pinoy (Starstyle, The Buzz, Showbiz Central)

OPENS JULY 22

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE NOTEBOOK"

AND BASED ON THE BEST-SELLING NOVEL BY JODI PICOULT

cameron diaz

my sister's keeper

Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate - a life and a role that she has never questioned... until now.

OPENS TOMORROW

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

IMAX 3D

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R-13

CRAWLING INTO THEATRES JULY 22

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He drinks hard, works harder

BARON GESLER IS DICED THAT he's always put in a bad light even when he's trying his best to do his work well.

Rumors circulated that he got in a brawl with co-star Albert Morenzabar during their shoot in Bohol for "Swardfish: Ako," and that he had a partner filed for paternity because he was drunk again.

"Hahaha nandoon na lahat na lang nung pinoy ka, inumpisan nila ng alcohol na naglo, inuman pa rin ako. Pero, I don't drop. I love to drink but I love my work more. I don't drink on the set. Besides, Direk Maryo J. de los Reyes will not allow it. Sa umaga pa lang kami in Alpas at light wine but stop na kami ... It's not true na nagmulan nila ng pasaway. It was a joined fick and a face-to-face which I wanted Mother Lily to try when she visited as a doctor."

Baron's not one who would let his one-get-to-the-way of his question.

Dating 'Sole'

Dennis Serio Pingris is all yours as for love and Mr. Right as a duo to face Twitfest. Juan Michel a.k.a. Mr. who turned 1 year old last June 28. His real super bubby Blare gave Mr. a friend you're in it's a fun bunch.

"Dad doesn't spoil Mr. enough," says the proud mom. "But he makes him feel so loved. He does everything including my baby. Where he visits, as, dad would look for Mr. right away and ask, 'Saan ang yung mahit na ano?'"

Lola Vic gave Mr. a check for his birthday because nevertheless. Knowing how generous Boxing is, it must be in the vicinity of what he gives away in "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?"

Contagious 'virus'

Ogie diwata won't wear it all. But he would catch the ADYOU virus from his honey Regine Velasquez. "I look good care of her when she was down with it," Ogie said. "I got worried because she was so weak and her Doctor said it was high for almost four days."

Their sweetness is more contagious than any virus. When they're in BED.... Ebony 1/8 only 1!

PJ fan

Super-talented artist Armand TJ might to be given a break. His first album "Ode to Intimacy" never fails to soothe me. His second album "Better Than a Feeling" contains a bonus track, "Moonwalker," which Armand composed as a tribute to Michael Jackson.

"The song wrote itself through me," he says. "The music was inside me and I just let it flow. The whole world has to encounter generative to hear of MJ's music."

MJ fanatics unite and let's sing our hearts out the new MJ-theme.

Gary V successor!

Sam Concepcion is forever grateful to his boyish face, SAMMiles, for making him one of the most successful tween stars today.

"I've come this far because of them," Sam says. "And I know we still have a long way to go together."

Sam broke new ground when he was tapped to sing the theme of the reboot-all-mad blockbuster "Sang Pa Singkit."

Gary V handpicked Sam and Bily Crawford as his rightful successors after being impressed with Sam's performance in his concert.

His second CD eMBOI released last date year. Each cause of Sam is "Your Song Presents" Boomtown and an All-AP TV review of the Sigge Show.

There's something about Sam!

Potential blockbusters

Viva Films is gearing up for two potential blockbusters. Those next projects are a Richard Gutierrez-Aiko Curtis movie ("Shorter Than Time") and an Aga Muhlach-Regine Velasquez film. The stars are ready for their close-ups and match-ups.

Layto-rooney

The Kapamilya network, headed by ABS-CBN Tuesdaynet's current manager, Cheryl Salcedo, recently treated the Planeten broadcast media to Layto, Layteleza, led by Papa Chen Layto and Monica Herrera of GMA 7 Sa Piso Lang ... Eilan!, Booked in Bohol, once Pinoy where they played various games and won Kapamilya shirts and premium items.

Were his songs in the version of the Bob Marley of Layto-ism, Bread of the Greenpeace band, made the crowd sing along with him.

Broadcasters say the crowd of 15,000 dancing on its feet. Roo Rivera proudly announced that he had to leave Layto.

It was one unforgettable Kapamilya experience as the Kapamilyas passed the town red in true Pinoy fashion Bohol.

E-mail: wenty@philstar.com / bluegirl@yahoo.com

DAMICA Sotto Pingris and husband Marc and son Mic

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3 TRANSFORMERS 2
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HANNAH MONTANA

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5 VIOLA ESTRELLA
6 THE MANNER
7 TRANSFORMERS 2
8 TRANSFORMERS 2
9 TRANSFORMERS 2
10 TRANSFORMERS 2

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

ULTRA 7

Pretty starlet loves flirting with guys

By the Entertainment staff

PRETTY STARLET IS QUICKLY GAINing notoriety among the young and restless set.

PS is allegedly a "playgirl," to use a misnomer, formerly DS, but here he couldn't convince underage teen than begins with the letter 'c.'

Who?

According to the grapevine, PS is addicted to flirting with guys and, recently, PS got a text on girlmate magazine because she had to down the screen with a Hunkmore Hunk that had a fling with in Dat not-so-distant past.

How awkward.

Trip to room's room

At an out-of-town event, he somehow went shocked to overhear a Veteran Host invite a Young Actor to "accompany" him to the men's room.

What's more stunning was that Di still, legit "escorted" VR to the comfort room.

Maybe, VR just needed a little extra loving?

Lousy work attitude

Troubled Celebrity has succeeded in running off two major advertisers.

According to a tweet, Kitchen Competition stars pulled out its work with TC because of the star's crazy work attitude.

TC reportedly arrives late for appearances with EC and, to top it off, has the gall to make unreasonable demands.

Turned out another advertiser, With Product, is also upset with TC.

For a commercial shoot with MR TC allegedly arrived late for hours late and, when she finally showed up, got nervary because an Ad Co-Star's makeup looked more polished.

Talent Manager purportedly negotiated TC but the star remains a prima donna in spite of her waning popularity.

Valenzuela awardees

Powell Santiago and Mae Lagan were recently recognized for their achievements in their respective careers by the City of Valenzuela. Santiago, who started out as an actor and later became a concert and film director, received the Gawad Pio Valenzuela for visual and performing arts. Lagan, a reporter and producer of the

PHOTO ES